

THE
ORLANDO
OF
ARIOSTO.

VOL. I.

THE
ORLANDO

ARISTOTLE

FOR





Vol:1

Frontispiece.

A. Hall sculp.

THE
O R L A N D O

OF

A R I O S T O, *K*

REDUCED TO XXIV BOOKS;

THE NARRATIVE CONNECTED,

AND THE

STORIES DISPOSED IN A REGULAR SERIES:

BY JOHN HOOLE,

TRANSLATOR OF THE ORIGINAL WORK
IN FORTY-SIX BOOKS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

V O L. I.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR J. DODSLEY, PALL-MALL.
M.DCC.XCI.

THE

ORLANDO

OF
THE
FAC
NRIOS TO

REDUCED TO NEW BOOKS

THE NARRATIVE CONNECTED

SINCE the first appearance of my first
book of 1785 in the year 1785

of assistance to the public



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IN TWO VOLUMES

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VOL. I. is the

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PRINTED FOR J. DODDLEY, RAIL-MAN.

M.DCC.XCII.

P R E F A C E.

SINCE the first appearance of my translation of ARIOSTO in the year 1783, I have had frequent occasions to observe that, though the version has been honoured with the public approbation, yet the number of those who have perused the ORLANDO FURIOSO is few, compared to those who have perused the JERUSALEM DELIVERED. The truth is, that the bulk of Ariosto's work is no little discouragement to the generality of readers; a poem of forty-six books is not easily encountered. But a greater and more reasonable objection to Ariosto arises from

the desultory manner of his narrative, and from the frequent and perplexing interruptions in his stories.

Though many readers, from a predilection for works of imagination, will, notwithstanding every difficulty, travel with great delight through the pages of Ariosto, yet there are likewise others, who having been familiarized to the more regular composition of Tasso, will feel the above objection in its full force. However these may be captivated with the general variety of the poem, or may acknowledge the merit of the several parts, yet should they find their memory unpleasantly burthened, or their attention unnecessarily distracted, they may probably lay aside the book, for the mind that seeks only relaxation and amusement, will not often condescend to employ its powers in developing the intricacies of fiction.

On these principles it has been said by several, that they have repeatedly perused the

JERUSALEM,

JERUSALEM, but cannot get through the ORLANDO, and they are therefore naturally surprised at the extravagant praises bestowed by many of the Italians on Ariosto, in preference to Tasso. I remember that, while engaged in my translation, I was once asked whether it would not be possible to reduce the poem of Ariosto to such method, or order, as might give a clear and comprehensive view of his story. At that time the proposal struck me as a matter extremely difficult, if not altogether impracticable, the several parts of his narrative and incidents appearing to be so studiously blended, as not to be disentangled; at least without such an arrangement as no license of translation could authorize.

It might, on this occasion, be suggested by some, that a selection of passages from this poem would not be unacceptable to the public; and indeed, in an age abounding with collections of disjointed parts of authors, under the denomination of BEAUTIES, *disjecti mem-*

bra poetæ, the voluminous and miscellaneous production of Ariosto seems singularly adapted to such purpose.

On maturely considering the subject, and being willing, from a veneration for my author, to preserve him from any unskilful dissection, I was at last determined, not to make a partial and unmeaning display of fables, sentiments, or descriptions, which, by being violently taken from their proper places, must lose all relative merit, but to reduce my translation within a narrower compass, by omitting many parts not essential to the connexion, and by compressing others; at the same time to arrange the different adventures in a more uniform series, so as not only to lead the reader clearly through all the pleasing diversities of the poet, but to form a complete whole, in which the great and important action might stand sufficiently marked amidst the infinity of subordinate episodes.

Having very little conception that a poem
of

of any regularity could be framed from Ariosto, it was an agreeable surprise to find, as I proceeded in my new, and not unpleasing task, that, though the fable had not the prescriptive unity of Homer and Virgil, the general spirit and turn of this romantic poem might be sufficiently preserved, and yet the narrative as uninterruptedly continued as in any composition of the epic kind, allowing for the great variety of subjects in Ariosto. By thus modelling the work, it appeared to me that each respective story would not only be more distinctly attended to, but that its effect might be better impressed; the poet's design being not seldom weakened by sudden interruption, or incongruous reflection.

Having communicated the progress of my scheme to several intelligent friends, and being greatly encouraged to complete it, I have at length digested the XLVI books of the ORLANDO FURIOSO into a poem of XXIV books, in expectation that it may prove no
ungrateful

ungrateful offering to every lover of Ariosto, and to every poetical reader: the first will not surely be displeased to find that poet, whom he has so long admired, set in a more striking competition with the splendid writers of the ancient and modern epic; while the latter, perhaps too hastily prepossessed with an opinion of the great superiority of Tasso, may be induced to commence acquaintance with a poem, which in point of interest, invention, and imagery, may often at least contend with his favourite JERUSALEM. It has been said by Dryden, that Tasso's story is not so pleasing as Ariosto's; and such opinion may possibly appear not wholly without foundation, when the various and delightful fictions of Ariosto are linked in a more regular chain of connexion.

Considering myself emancipated from all restraint of a translator, I have taken every liberty that seemed conducive to the end proposed. I have omitted several of the tales, together

gether with the long and tedious panegyrics on the families of Estè, and other allusions to Italian history. The occasional licentiousness of the original being too generally confessed, all the offensive passages were softened in my translation, but in the following publication they are entirely rejected.

The reader will likewise observe that, in this edition, several lines of connexion are inserted, and that some few liberties, which were deemed necessary upon the present plan, have been taken in the management and disposition of the fable and incidents, particularly in the account of Angelica being carried off by the people of Ebuda, and in the adventure of Brandimart at Rodomont's bridge.

Having introduced this celebrated Italian to my countrymen, with all his native wildness and irregularity, which alone can give a full idea of his genius and character, let me hope that I shall not be thought reprehensible by his warmest admirers, for having thus adopted

gether

the

the only method that seemed wanting to make the powers of his poetry more universally felt and acknowledged.

In the prosecution of my design, I have experienced an additional satisfaction by the discharge of a new kind of duty to my author; as it is imagined that many readers may from the present book be led to a knowledge of the beauties of this wonderful poet, to which they might ever have remained strangers in the original form of his poem.

E R R A T A.

VOL. I.

Page 127, Ver. 62—At once of ring, of shield, of steed bereft,
Read

At once of ring and flying steed bereft.

Page 255, Ver. 51—Olinero, *read* Olivero.

— 429, — 193—knight, *read* night.

VOL. II.

Page 71, Ver. 428—to, *read* so.

— 320, — 565—Balifardo *read* Balifarda.

THE
FIRST BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.

VOL. I.

B

THE ARGUMENT.

ORLANDO, with Angelica, whom he had conducted from India, arrives at the camp of Charlemain. Angelica is taken from Orlando by the emperor, in order to put an end to the dissension between Orlando and Rinaldo, and given to the charge of Namus. Angelica, on the defeat of the Christians, flies from the camp : she meets with Rinaldo and Ferrau : combat between these knights. Appearance of the ghost of Argalia. Meeting of Sacripant and Angelica. Sacripant is overthrown by a strange knight. Combat of Rinaldo and Sacripant. Angelica flies. The rivals are parted by enchantment. Rinaldo sent on an embassy to England, is cast on the shore of Scotland ; he delivers a lady from ruffians, and hears the story of Geneura, the king's daughter.

THE
FIRST BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.

DAMES, knights, and arms, and love! the
deeds that spring

From courteous minds, and venturous feats, I sing!

What time the Moors from Afric's hostile strand

Croft the wide seas to ravage Gallia's land,

By Agramant, their youthful monarch, led, 5

In deep resentment for Troyano dead,

With threats on Charlemain t' avenge his fate,

Th' imperial guardian of the Roman state.

Nor will I less Orlando's acts rehearse,

A tale nor told in prose, nor sung in verse; 10

Who once the flower of arms, and wisdom's boast,

By fatal love his manly senses lost.

If she, for whom like anguish wounds my heart,

To my weak skill her gracious aid impart,

The timorous bard shall needful succour find, 15
To end the task long ponder'd in his mind.

Vouchsafe, great offspring of th' Herculean line,
In whom our age's grace and glory shine,
Hippolito, these humble lines to take,
The sole return your poet e'er can make ; 20
Nor deem the labour poor, or tribute small ;
'Tis all he has, and thus he offers all !

Here 'midst the bravest chiefs prepare to view,
(Those honour'd chiefs to whom the lays are due)
Renown'd Rogero, from whose loins I trace 25
The ancient fountain of your glorious race :
So you awhile each weightier care suspend,
And to my tale a pleas'd attention lend.

Orlando still the powerful flame confess'd
Of love long cherish'd in his noble breast, 30
For fair Angelica, the peerless maid,
Whose fire but late Albracca's sceptre sway'd ;
Her, for whose sake his arms such wreaths obtain'd,
In Media, Tartary, and India gain'd.
Now to the west his royal charge he led, 35
Where Charlemain the tented legions spread,
And near Pyrene's hills his standard rear'd,
Where France and Germany combin'd appear'd,

That

That Spain and Afric's monarchs, to their cost,
Might rue their vain designs and empty boast: 40
This, fummon'd all his subjects to the field,
Whose hand could lift the spear, or falchion wield;
That, once again impell'd the Spanish race
To conquer Gallia, and her realm deface.
And hither to the camp Orlando drew, 45
But soon, alas! his fatal error knew.
How oft the wisest err! how short the span
Of judgment here bestow'd on mortal man!
She, whom from distant regions safe he brought,
She, for whose sake such bloody fields he fought, 50
No sword unsheath'd, no hostile force apply'd,
Amidst his friends was ravish'd from his side.
This Charles decreed, the discord to compose,
That 'twixt Orlando and Rinaldo rose:
Each kindred chief the beauteous virgin claim'd; 55
Deep hatred hence each rival heart inflam'd:
The king, who griev'd to see the knights engage
With fatal enmity and jealous rage,
Remov'd th' unhappy cause, and to the care
Of great Bavaria's duke consign'd the fair; 60
Yet promis'd he should bear the maid away,
His valour's prize, on that important day,

Whose arm could best the Pagan troops oppose,
And strow the sanguine plain with lifeless foes.
But Heaven dispers'd these hopes in empty wind: 65
The Christian bands th' inglorious field resign'd;
The duke, with many a chief, was prisoner made,
The tents, abandon'd, to the foes betray'd.

The damsel, doom'd to yield her blooming charms,
A recompense to grace the victor's arms, 70
With terror seiz'd, her ready palfrey took,
And, by a speedy flight, the camp forsook.

As through a narrow woodland path she stray'd,
On foot a warrior chanc'd to meet the maid:
The shining cuirass, and the helm he wore, 75
His thigh the sword, his arm the buckler bore;
While through the woods he ran with swifter pace
Than village swains half naked in the race.

Not with such haste the timorous maiden flies,
Who, unawares, a latent snake espies; 80
As, when Angelica beheld the knight,
She turn'd the reins, and headlong urg'd her flight.

This was the Paladin for valour known,
Lord of mount Alban, and duke Amon's son,
Rinaldo nam'd, who late, when fortune crost 85
The Christian hopes, his steed Bayardo lost.

Soon

Soon as his eyes beheld th' approaching fair,
Full well he knew that soft enchanting air;
Full well he knew that face which caus'd his smart,
And held in love's strong net his manly heart. 90

Meantime th' affrighted damsel threw the reins
Loose on her courser's neck, and scour'd the plains;
All pale and trembling, struck with deep dismay,
She let her flying palfrey choose the way;
Till on a river's bank Ferrau she view'd, 95
Who left the fight, with dust and sweat bedew'd,
And here with cooling streams his thirst allay'd;
When lo! a sudden chance the warrior stay'd:

For where the flood its circling eddies tost,
His helmet, sunk amidst the sands, was lost. 100

Now to the stream the panting virgin flies,
And rends the air with supplicating cries;
The Pagan warrior, startled at the sound,
Leap'd from the shore, and cast his eyes around;
Till, earnest gazing, as she nearer drew, 105
Though pale with dread, the trembling fair he knew;
Then, as a knight who courteous deeds profess'd,
And love, long since, enkindled in his breast;
Dauntless her person to defend he swore,
Though on his head no fencing helm he wore. 110

He grasp'd his sword, and mov'd with haughty stride }
 To meet Rinaldo, who his force defy'd, }
 And oft had each the other's valour try'd. }

And now, on foot, oppos'd, and man to man,
 With swords unlheath'd, a dreadful fight began; 115
 In vain did plate and mail their limbs enclose,
 Not massy anvils could resist their blows.

While thus each gallant chief his prowess tries,
 Her palfrey's feet again the virgin plies,
 At his full stretch she drives him o'er the plain, 120
 And seeks the shelter of the woods again.

Long had the knights contended in the field,
 Nor either knight could make his rival yield;
 When now Rinaldo miss'd the royal maid,
 And first his valorous arm from combat stay'd. 125

While thus on me your thoughtless rage you turn,
 We both (he cry'd) have equal cause to mourn;
 If yonder dame, the fun of female charms,
 Has fill'd your glowing breast with soft alarms,
 What gain were yours, suppose me prisoner made, 130
 Or breathless, by the chance of battle, laid?
 How shall your arms enfold the lovely prize,
 For while we here contend, behold she flies!
 First wisdom bids secure th' unrivall'd fair,
 And let the sword our title then declare. 135

Ferrau

00 Ferrau assenting heard; and either knight
Agreed awhile t' adjourn the bloody fight:
Nor yet the courteous pagan prince would view
Brave Amon's son on foot his way pursue,
But on his steed behind the warrior plac'd, 140
And by the track the flying damsel trac'd.

O noble minds, by knights of old possess'd!
Two faiths they knew, one love their hearts profess'd;
Yet while their limbs the smarting anguish feel,
Of strokes inflicted by the hostile steel, 145
Through winding paths, and lonely woods they go,
And no suspicion their brave bosoms know.
At length the horse, with double spurring, drew
To where two several ways appear'd in view;
When doubtful which to take, one gentle knight 150
For fortune took the left, and one the right.

Long through the devious wilds the Spaniard pass'd,
And to the river's banks return'd at last:
The place again the wandering warrior view'd,
Where late he drop'd his casque amidst the flood: 155
A tall young poplar on the banks arose;
From this a branch he hew'd and lopt the boughs:
A stake thus fashion'd with industrious art,
He rak'd the river round in every part:

When,

When, rising from the troubled brook, was seen 160
A youth with features pale and ghastly mien:
Above the circling stream he rais'd his breast;
His head alone was bare, all arm'd the rest;
His better hand the fatal helmet bore,
The helmet that in vain was fought before: 165
Full on Ferrau he turn'd with threatening look,
And thus the ghost th' astonish'd knight bespoke.

Wretch! does this helm perplex thy faithless mind,
A helm thou should'st have long ere this resign'd?
Remember fair Angelica, and view 170
In me her brother, whom thy weapon slew.
Didst thou not vow, with all my arms, to hide
My casque ere long beneath the whelming tide?
Though basely thou hast fail'd thy plighted word,
See juster fortune has my own restor'd: 175
But if thou seek'st another helm to gain,
Seek one that may no more thy honour stain:
Seek one secur'd with stronger temper'd charms;
Such has Orlando, such Rinaldo arms:
Mambrino, this; Almontes, that possess'd; 180
By one of these thy brows be nobler press'd.

The Saracen beholds with wild affright,
The strange appearance of the phantom-knight;

His

His utterance fails, his hairs like bristles rise,
And from his cheek the healthful colour flies : 185
But when he hears Argalia, whom he slew,
(Argalia was the name the warrior knew)
Reproach his tainted faith and breach of fame,
He burns with rage, and glows with conscious shame;
And by his mother's life, Lanfusa, vows 190
To wear no fencing head-piece o'er his brows,
But that which fam'd in Aspramont of yore,
From fierce Almontes' head Orlando tore.

Rinaldo, who a different path had try'd,
As fortune led, full soon before him spy'd 195
His gallant courser bounding o'er the plain—
Stay, my Bayardo, stay—thy flight restrain :
Much has thy want to-day perplex'd thy lord.—
The steed, regardless of his master's word,
Through the thick forest fled with speed renew'd, 200
While, fir'd with added rage, the knight pursu'd.

Still fair Angelica affrighted speeds
O'er savage wilds, and unfrequented meads ;
Starts at the leaves that rustle with the wind,
And thinks the knight pursues her close behind. 205
So when a fawn or kid by chance espies
His hapless dam some furious leopard's prize,

Far from the dreadful fight, with terror chac'd,
From grove to grove he flies with trembling haste,
While every bush he touches in his way, 210
He thinks the cruel savage gripes his prey,

Unconscious where she pass'd, that day and night,
With half the next, the damsel urg'd her flight.

At length she view'd a lovely sylvan scene,
Where two clear rivulets fed th' eternal green; 215
Along the fields they roll their easy tide,
The stones, with murmuring noise, their passage chide.

Here lighting on the ground, she loos'd the reins,
And gave her steed to graze th' enamell'd plains.

Not distant far, an arbour struck her view, 220

Where flowery herbs and blushing roses grew:

Close by the bower the glassy mirror flow'd:

The bower within a cool retreat bestow'd,

Where nature's hand so thick the branches wove,

No light, no sun could pierce the dusky grove: 225

A rising bank, with tender herbage spread,

Had form'd for soft repose a rural bed.

The lovely virgin here her limbs compos'd,

Till downy sleep her weary eyelids clos'd.

Not long she lay, for soon her slumber fled, 230

A trampling steed her sudden terror bred:

When,

When, rising silent, near the river's side,
A graceful warrior, sheath'd in arms, she spy'd.

Th' approaching stranger now his steed forsook,
And stretch'd his careless limbs beside the brook, 235
His arm sustain'd his head, and, lost in thought,
He seem'd a statue by the sculptor wrought,
Till sighs began to breathe and tears to flow,
That rocks and trees might soften at his woe.

Ah me! (he cry'd) whence comes this inward
smart, 240
These thoughts that burn at once and freeze my heart?
What to a tardy wretch, like me, remains?
With happier speed the fruit another gains.
Since then I neither fruit nor flowers enjoy,
Why should her love in vain my peace destroy? 245
Sweet blooms the virgin like the fragrant rose
Which on its native stem unfully'd grows;
Where fencing walls the garden spot surround,
Nor swains, nor browsing cattle tread the ground:
The earth and streams their mutual tribute lend, 250
Soft breathe the gales, the pearly dew descends:
Fair youths and amorous damsels with delight,
Enjoy the grateful scent, and bless the sight.
But if some hand the tender stalk invades,
Lost is its beauty and its colour fades: 255

No

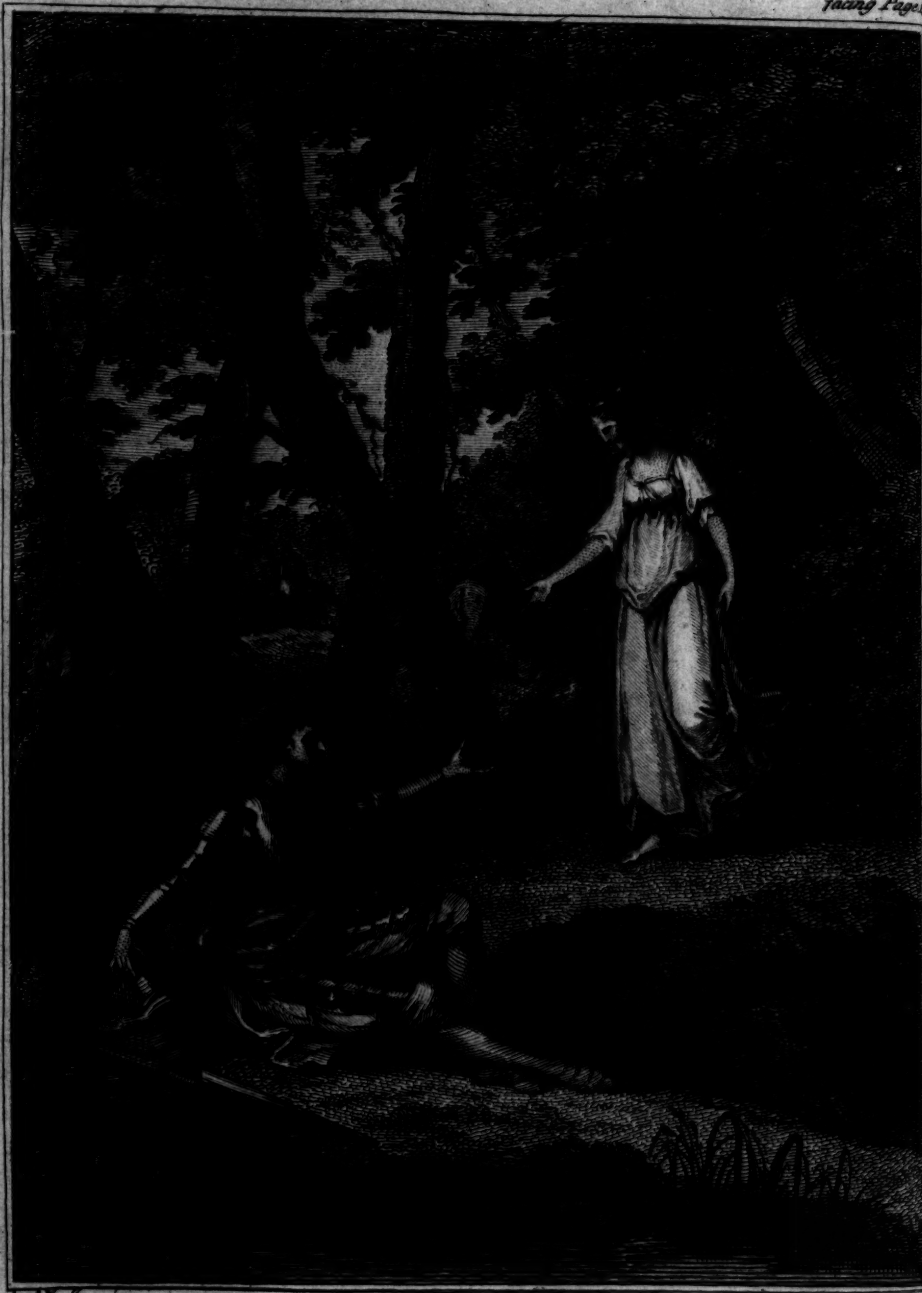
No more the care of heaven, or garden's boast,
And all its praise with youths and damsels lost.
So when a maiden grants some favour'd swain,
The prize by many lovers sought in vain,
Her empire fades; the power she once possess'd, 260
She forfeits soon in every rival breast.
While others triumph in each fond desire,
Relentless fortune! I with want expire.
Then shake this fatal beauty from thy mind,
And give thy fruitless passion to the wind — 265
Ah! no — this instant let my life depart,
Ere her dear form is banish'd from my heart.

If any seek to learn the warrior's name
Whose mournful tears increas'd the running stream,
'Twas Sacripant, to hapless love a prey, 270
Whose rule Circassia's ample realms obey:
For fair Angelica his course he bends
From eastern climes to where the sun descends:
For, pierc'd with grief, he heard in India's land
With Brava's knight * she sought the Gallic strand. 275
Himself that fatal conflict had beheld,
When Pagan arms the Christian forces quell'd:
Since then through many a winding track he stray'd,
And fought, with fruitless care, the wandering maid.

* ORLANDO.

While,





While, grieving thus, in doleful state he lies, 280
The tears like fountains gushing from his eyes,
Angelica attentive hears his moan,
Whose constant passion long the fair had known:
Yet, cold as marble, her obdurate breast
No kindly pity for his woes confess'd: 285
As one who treats mankind with like disdain,
Whose wayward love no worth could e'er obtain:
But thus with perils clos'd on every side,
She thinks in him that Fortune might provide
A sure defence, her champion and her guide. 290

Then, sudden issuing from the tufted wood,
Confess'd in open sight the virgin stood:
As, on the scene, from cave or painted grove,
Appears Diana, or the queen of love.

Struck with the vision, Sacripant amaz'd 295
On fair Angelica in rapture gaz'd:
Not with such joy a mother views again
Her darling offspring, deem'd in battle slain,
Who saw the troops without him home return'd,
And long his loss with tears maternal mourn'd. 300
The lover now advanc'd with eager pace,
To clasp his fair one with a warm embrace:

While

While she, far distant from her native seat,
 Refus'd not thus her faithful knight to meet,
 With whom she hop'd ere long her ancient realms
 to greet. 305

Then all her story she at full express'd,
 Ev'n from the day, when urg'd by her request,
 He parted, succours in the east to gain
 From fam'd Gradasso king of Sericane :
 How great Orlando did her steps attend,
 And safe from danger and mischance defend ;
 While, as she from her birth had kept unstain'd
 Her virgin fame, he still that fame maintain'd.

Thus she; when sudden from the neighbouring grove,
 A rustling noise disturb'd the hour of love :
 The knight his helmet on his head replac'd ;
 His other parts in shining steel were cas'd :
 Again with curbing bit his steed he rein'd,
 Remounted swiftly and his lance regain'd.

Now, issuing from the wood, a knight is seen
 Of warlike semblance and commanding mien :
 Of dazzling white the furniture he wears,
 And in his casque a snowy plume he bears.
 But Sacripant beholds him from afar
 With haughty looks, and eyes that menace war. 325

In

In threatening words the stranger makes return,
With equal confidence and equal scorn :
At once he spoke, and to the combat prefs'd,
His courser spur'd and plac'd his lance in rest ;
King Sacripant return'd with equal speed ; 330
And each on each impell'd his rapid steed.
Not bulls or lions thus the battle wage
With teeth and horns, in mutual blood and rage,
As fought these eager warriors in the field :
Each forceful javelin pierc'd the other's shield 335
With hideous crash : the dreadful clangors rise,
Swell from the vales, and echo to the skies !
Through either's breast had pierc'd the pointed wood,
But the well-temper'd plates the force withstood.
The fiery courfers, long to battle bred, 340
Like butting rams encounter'd head to head.
The stranger's with the shock began to reel,
But soon recover'd with the goring steel ;
While on the ground the Pagan's breathless fell,
A beast that, living, serv'd his master well. 345
The knight unknown, beholding on the mead
His foe lie crush'd beneath the slaughter'd steed,
Swift wheeling round, again pursu'd his way,
And left the fierce Circassian where he lay.

As when, the thunder o'er, the ether clears, 350
Slow rising from the stroke the hind appears,
Where stretch'd he lay all senseless on the plain,
While fast beside him lay his oxen slain;
And sees the pine, that once had rais'd in air
Its stately branches, now of honours bare: 355
So rose the Pagan from the fatal place,
His mistress present at the dire disgrace.

Then gently she: Let not my lord bemoan
His courser's fatal error, not his own;
For him had grassy meads been fitter far, 360
Or stalls with grain surcharg'd, than feats of war!
Yet little praise awaits yon haughty knight,
Nor can he justly glory in his might;
For he, methinks, may well be said to yield,
Who first forsakes the fight and flies the field. 365

With words like these the drooping king she cheer'd,
When from the woods a messenger appear'd;
Tir'd with a length of way he seem'd to ride,
His crooked horn and wallet at his side:
And now, approaching to the Pagan knight, 370
He ask'd if he had seen, with buckler white,
And snowy plumage o'er his crest display'd,
A warrior passing through the forest shade.

To

To whom thus Sacripant in brief again:
The knight you seek has stretch'd me on the plain: 375
But now he parted hence; to him I owe
My sham'd defeat, nor yet my victor know.
I shall not, since you wish me to reveal,
(Reply'd the messenger) your foe conceal:
Know then, your fall was by a virgin-dame, 380
Of fame for deeds of arms, of greater fame
For beauteous form, and Bradamant her name. }

He said; and turn'd his courser from the place:
The Saracen, o'erwhelm'd with new disgrace,
All mute with conscious shame, dejected stood, 385
While o'er his features flush'd the mantling blood;
Then to the damsel's steed the knight address'd
His silent steps, and now the saddle press'd;
And plac'd the fair behind him on the seat,
To seek in safer groves a new retreat. 390

Ere far they rode, they heard a trampling sound,
That all the forest seem'd to shake around:
They look, and soon a stately steed behold,
Whose costly trappings shine with burnish'd gold;
He leaps the steepy mounds, and crossing floods, 395
And bends before his way the crashing woods.
Unless I err (exclaim'd the startled maid)
I see Bayardo through yon breaking shade;

One palfrey could but ill two riders bear,
And fortune sends him to relieve our care. 400

She said: The king, alighting on the plain,
Drew near, and thought secure to seize the rein;
But swift as lightnings flash along the sky,
With spurning heels Bayardo made reply.
It chanc'd beside him the Circassian stood, 405
Else had he mourn'd his rash attempt in blood.

Then to Angelica with easy pace
He moves, and humbly views her well-known face:
A spaniel thus, domestic at the board,
Fawns after absence, and surveys his lord. 410

Him well the damsel knew; and well the steed
Confess'd the hand that gave him oft to feed;
The hand that now embolden'd seiz'd the rein,
Strok'd his broad chest, and smooth'd his ruffled
mane:

While conscious he, with wondrous sense indu'd, 415
Still as a lamb, beside her gently stood,
The watchful Pagan leapt into the seat,
And curb'd, with streighten'd reins, Bayardo's heat.
The palfrey to Angelica remain'd,
Who gladly thus her former place regain'd. 420

Now as she cast her fearful eyes aside,
A knight on foot in sounding arms she spy'd:

What

What sudden terror on her face was shown,
Soon as the knight for Amon's son was known.
Long had he woo'd, but she detests his love ; 425
Not swifter from the falcon flies the dove.
He hated once, while she with ardor burn'd ;
And now behold their several fortunes turn'd.
This cause at first from two fair fountains came,
Their waters different, but their look the same : 430
Amidst the shade of Arden's dreary wood,
Full in each other's view the fountains stood :
Who drinks of one, inflames with love his heart ;
Who drinks the other stream contemns his dart :
Rinaldo tasted that, and inly burn'd ; 435
The damsel this, and hate for love return'd.

Soon as Angelica beheld the knight,
A sudden mist o'erspread her cheerful sight ;
While with a faltering voice and troubled look,
To Sacripant with suppliant tone she spoke ; 440
And begg'd him not th' approaching chief to meet,
But turn his courser, and betimes retreat.

Does then my prowess (Sacripant replies)
Appear so mean and worthless in your eyes,
That you too feeble deem this slighted hand, 445
The force of yonder champion to withstand ?

Not so (she said)—nor to reply she knew;
As thus she spoke Rinaldo nearer drew,
Who now began the Pagan king to threat,
Soon as his eyes the well-known courser met, 450
And that lov'd face he view'd, whose charms had fir'd
His ravish'd bosom, and his soul inspir'd.

Rinaldo furious thus—Base thief! alight,
Forfake my courser, and restore my right.
But more—yen damsel to my arms resign; 455
'Twere far unmeet such beauties should be thine.
Wer't not a shame, that hence a thief should bear
A steed so stately, and a maid so fair!

Thief! dost thou say?—take back th' opprobrious lye—
(With equal rage the Pagan made reply). 460
This instant shall th' important strife decide,
Who merits best the courser, and the bride.

As when two angry mastives meeting show
Their threatening fangs, their glaring eye-balls glow;
At last with snarls the bitter fray they wage, 465
And bite and tear in mutual blood and rage.
So after piercing taunts and vengeful words,
The mighty warriors drew their shining swords.

One urg'd the conflict from the courser's height,
One on his feet below maintain'd the fight; 470
But

But well, by nature taught, the faithful steed
Against his lord refus'd his strength and speed :
Nor could Circassia's prince, by skill or force,
With spur or bit direct the restiff horse.
Now prone to earth his head Bayardo thrust ; 475
Now wheel'd around ; now furious spurn'd the dust :
When haughty Sacripant in vain had try'd
Each art to tame th' unruly courser's pride,
His hand he laid upon the saddle-bow,
And swift alighted on the plain below. 480

The Pagan, thus escap'd Bayardo's might,
Between the chiefs ensu'd a dreadful fight.
Now high, now low, their rapid steel they ply ;
While from their arms the fiery sparkles fly !
Not swifter the repeated strokes go round, 485
Which hollow Ætna's winding caves resound,
When Vulcan bids the ponderous hammers move,
To forge the thunder and the bolts of Jove.
Sometimes they feign a stroke ; sometimes they stay ;
Then aim the thrust, as skilful in the play. 490
Sometimes they rise ; then stoop upon the field ;
Now open lie ; then crouch beneath the shield ;
Now ward ; then with a slip elude the blow ;
Now forward step ; then backward from the foe :

Now round they move; and where the one gives
place 495

The other presses on with eager pace.

Brave Amon's son *, collecting all his might,
His weapon rais'd to strike the Pagan knight;
When Sacripant, to meet the falchion, held,
Compos'd of bone and steel, his ample shield: 500
The sword Fusberta, rushing from on high,
Pierc'd the tough plates; the sounding woods reply;
The bone and steel, like ice, in shivers broke;
His arm benumb'd confess'd the dreadful stroke.

This, when the fair and timorous damsel view'd, 505
A sudden fear congeal'd her vital blood;
A death-like paleness chac'd her rosy bloom,
Like one who trembling waits his fatal doom.
She turn'd her palfrey to the woods in haste,
And through a narrow thorny passage pass'd; 510
While oft she cast behind her timorous sight,
Or deem'd she heard Albano's hateful knight *: 515
Not far she fled, but where a valley lay,
She met an aged hermit on the way:
Who seem'd with years and frequent fasting worn,
And gently on a slow-pac'd ass was borne:

• RINALDO.

While

While all his form bespoke a pious mind,
From the vain follies of the world refin'd:
Yet, when the fair and blooming maid appear'd,
So much her looks his drooping spirits cheer'd; 520
Though cold and feeble, as his age requir'd,
An unknown warmth his languid pulse inspir'd.

The hermit, vers'd in magic, gently strove
The dame to comfort and her fears remove;
A wondrous book he read, when to their fight, 525
In likeness of a page, appear'd a sprite;
Who, by the force of strong enchantment bound,
Went where the knights in cruel strife he found;
And, when his eyes the furious fight espy'd,
Between them boldly rush'd, and loudly cry'd. 530

Tell me, ye warriors! what avails the strife,
Though either should deprive his foe of life,
If without sword unsheath'd, without the fear
Of shatter'd armour, or the lifted spear,
Orlando now to Paris swift conveys 535
The maid, whose charms your fond contention raise?
And know, if Paris' walls they safely gain,
Henceforth your hopes to see your love are vain.

He said: the gallant knights on either hand,
Struck with the news, abash'd and silent stand; 540

At length, a sigh deep-issuing from his breast,
His steps Rinaldo to his steed address'd;
Nor bade farewell, nor with a courteous mind,
He proffer'd once to take the knight behind.

Deem it not strange Rinaldo seiz'd again 545
The generous courser fought so long in vain;
Who, fraught with human sense, when first he view'd
The trembling damsel's flight, her track pursu'd.
Not idly from the Christian camp he fled,
But to regain the maid his master led. 550
By him Rinaldo twice the fair o'ertook,
And twice the fair his eager sight forsook:
For first Ferrau, as late my tale disclos'd,
Then Sacripant his amorous hopes oppos'd.

Bayardo now, confiding in the sprite, 555
Whose specious falsehood had amus'd the knight,
Pursu'd his way, and patient of command,
Obey'd the spur, and answer'd to the hand.
Rinaldo, fir'd with love and stern disdain,
To Paris flies, and gives up all the rein; 560
Nor ceas'd his eager journey morn or night,
Till the near city rose before his sight;
Where Charlemain, with his defeated crew,
Th' unhappy remnants of his strength withdrew:

A siege

A siege expecting now, he bends his care, 565
Supplies of stores and forces to prepare :
He sinks the trenches, fortifies the walls,
And every aid, in time of danger, calls ;
Provides an embassy to England's shore,
With speed auxiliar prowess to implore ; 570
Then sends Rinaldo to the British clime,
Known by fair England's name in future time.

The knight, impatient to return again,
Against the counsels of the sailor-train,
Tempts the black sea, that wears a threatening form, 575
And, murmuring hoarse, forbodes th' approaching storm.
The skilful mariners, with busy care,
Strike their broad sails to meet the watery war ;
At last upon the shore of Scotland light,
Where Caledonia's forest rose to fight, 580
That 'midst its ancient oaks was wont to hear
The riven target and the shiver'd spear.
Here Tristram mighty deeds perform'd of old,
Galasso, Launcelot, and Arthur bold,
Galvano brave ; with more, that titles drew 585
Both from the ancient table, and the new ;
Knights, who have left, to speak their valiant mind,
More than one trophy of their worth behind.

Rinaldo

Rinaldo arms, his steed Bayardo takes,
And landing on the shore, the sea forsakes. 590
Without a squire the fearless knight pervades
The gloomy horror of those dreary shades.
The first day brought him to an abbey fair,
Whose wealth was spent with hospitable care,
Beneath its roof reception to provide 595
For knights and dames that through the forest ride.
The monks and abbot, with a friendly grace,
Welcom'd the brave Rinaldo to the place;
Who now enquir'd (but not till grateful food
Had cheer'd his spirits and his strength renew'd) 600
How in the compass of that savage ground,
Adventures strange by wandering knights were found.

He might (they answer'd) 'midst the woods essay
A thousand perils in the lonely way;
But if (they cry'd) your honour you regard, 605
Then hear the noblest enterprise prepar'd,
That ever yet, in ancient times or new,
A courteous warrior could in arms pursue.
Our monarch's daughter needs a gallant knight,
In her defence to wage a single fight 610
Against a lord (Lurcanio is his name)
Who seeks to spoil her of her life and fame.

He

He to her fire has charg'd the royal maid
With lawless love and virgin truth betray'd.
Her crime in flames she expiates by the laws, 615
Unless a champion rises in her cause

Within a month (now hastening to an end)
Her life against th' accuser to defend.

The king, who for Geneura's safety fears,
(Such is the name his hapless daughter bears) 620
Proclaims that he, whose arm will prove the fight,
And bravely conquer in his daughter's right,
Shall for his bride the royal maid receive,
With such a dower as fits a prince to give.

Rinaldo mus'd awhile, then thus reply'd: 625
Procure me now a safe and skilful guide;
And give me but th' accuser's face to see,
I trust, in heaven, to set Geneura free.

Soon as the rosy morn, with splendor bright,
Reveal'd the hemisphere of rising light, 630
Rinaldo arm'd, and mounted on his steed,
He took a trusty squire the way to lead;
Then left the abbey, and his course pursu'd
For many a mile along the gloomy wood;
When near at hand they hear a screaming sound, 635
The forest echoes to the noise around;

The

The knight Bayardo spurs, the squire his steed,
 To reach the valley whence the cries proceed.
 Betwixt two men a damsel there was seen,
 Who distant seem'd of fair and comely mien; 640
 On either side the ruffians ready stood
 With naked swords to dye the ground with blood;
 While she with prayers, and many a flowing tear,
 Did for a while the dreadful stroke defer.

Soon as the murderers saw th' approaching knight, 645
 At once they turn'd their backs in sudden flight;
 The pitying warrior bade the squire to bear
 Behind him, on their way, the weeping fair;
 Then gently ask'd what cruel turns of fate
 Had so deprest her to this wretched state. 650

The damsel thus began: Prepare to hear
 Such deeds of guile as never reach'd your ear:
 In early youth, I held an honour'd place
 At Scotland's court in fair Geneura's grace:
 But cruel Love my state with envy saw, 655
 And soon, alas! subdu'd me to his law:
 He made, of every youth and comely knight,
 The duke of Albany my sole delight.
 We hear the speech, we see the looks express,
 But who can view the secrets of the breast? 660

His love, avow'd, my bosom first inspir'd
With tender thoughts, with gentle wishes fir'd:
So far at length my fond belief was led,
That I receiv'd him to my virgin bed.
Nor this alone; but that recess I chose 665
In which sometimes the princess would repose;
There by a gall'ry to the window join'd,
A favour'd friend might easy entrance find.
By this I often introduc'd my love,
A filken ladder throwing from above. 670
'Twas thus I did th' enamour'd duke receive,
Whene'er Geneura's absence gave me leave;
Who us'd to change her bed, sometimes to fly
The burning heat, sometimes the freezing sky.

For many a month to all the court unknown, 675
In frequent joys our secret hours had flown:
So blind was I, I ne'er discover'd yet
That little truth was his, but much deceit;
Though the base treasons of his faithless breast
Were plainly by a thousand signs exprest. 680
At length, without disguise, he durst confess
His close design Geneura to possess:
Judge, in my bosom if he bore a part,
Or rather, if he rul'd not all my heart;

He

He own'd his purpos'd suit, nor blush'd with shame 685
To ask my friendly aid to win the dame;
But vow'd his ardor feign'd, in hopes alone
To form a near alliance to the throne;
And promis'd, should my counsel e'er ensure
His sovereign's favour, and the bride secure; 690
The service, ever present to his mind,
In ties of gratitude his soul should bind:
That I alone, his wife, his friends above,
Should reign th' unrivall'd partner of his love.

I (that his happiness endeavour'd still, 695
Nor e'er in thought or deed control'd his will)
Took all occasions that I saw to raise
In fair Geneura's ear my lover's praise.
Heaven knows how truly I employ'd my art
To serve him with a just and faithful heart! 700
But vain th' attempt—another love possess'd
The fair one's grace, and kindled all her breast;
A knight, who with his brother, left the port
Of distant Italy, for Scotland's court;
Where soon in arms such vast renown he gain'd, 705
No son of Britain greater praise obtain'd:
The king esteem'd him, and his favour show'd,
By gifts of honour, and of wealth bestow'd;

Castles

Castles and towns he gave to his command,
And rank'd him midst the barons of the land. 710
This knight the name of Ariodantes bore,
The monarch lov'd him much, his daughter more:
The warrior's valiant deeds with warmth inspir'd
Her gentle soul, but more the lover fir'd.

I footh'd his grief, and oft essay'd to make 715
Th' ambitious duke his fond design forsake.
In vain I footh'd: when Polinesso heard
(Such was his name) what little hopes appear'd
T' obtain his wish, each thought of tender kind
Driven from his soul, his fierce revengeful mind, 720
Enrag'd to see another favour'd more,
To hate converted what was love before;
Between Geneura, and her favourite knight,
Resolv'd to kindle rage and jealous spite.
Nor would he trust with me his treacherous thought, 725
But counsel only from himself he sought.

At last, he thus his speech began to frame:
My dear Dalinda, (thus I'm known by name)
Thou see'st the tree, though often hewn, will shoot
Fresh branches from the new-divided root; 730
Thus nought can wholly my desires suppress,
Though lopt so often by their ill success;

Yet think not that I prize the haughty dame,
But baffled!—scorn'd—my soul rejects the shame!
Attend my wish: when next, by love inspir'd, 735
We meet, the princess to her bed retir'd,
Take every garment that aside she throws,
And on yourself her ornaments dispose:
Then wayward fancy shall my thoughts possess,
That you are her, your mien and garb confess: 740
Indulge but this—this momentary cheat,
To cure my vain desire by such deceit;
And every hour of future life shall prove
My faith unshaken to Dalinda's love.

He said; I yielded to his fond request, 745
Nor saw the treason lurking in his breast.

His purpose thus secur'd, the wily duke
Aside th' unwary Ariodantes took;
For once they liv'd in friendship's social band
Ere fatal rivals for Geneura's hand. 750

With deep regret I find (he thus address'd
The gentle knight) when singled from the rest,
Amidst my peers I show'd you most regard,
You should so ill my partial choice reward.

Behold me now preparing to demand 755
The maid in marriage from my sovereign's hand.

Why

Why will you then disturb my rightful claim?

Why thus indulge a rash and hopeless flame?

I swear, had Heaven revers'd our fates, to thee

My juster choice had left the fair-one free. 760

It moves me more to view your fruitless pain,

(Thus Ariodantes answer'd him again)

Since, ere your thoughts aspir'd to win the dame,

My soul had nourish'd long the growing flame;

Why then respect not you our friendly band, 765

Or pay my vows the deference you demand?

Were you beheld with more propitious eyes,

Long since had I resign'd the beauteous prize:

But well I hope the princely maid to wed,

Though your possessions may be wider spread: 770

Not less my deeds by Scotland's king approv'd,

And by his daughter am I more belov'd.

O'erweening confidence (the duke rejoin'd)

Has but deceiv'd thy fond distemper'd mind.

Sincere the progress of thy love impart, 775

And, in return, will I disclose my heart:

So he, who in success appears to yield,

Shall to his happier rival quit the field.

Whate'er thou speak'st, yon' Heaven I here attest,

The tale shall safe within this bosom rest; 780

D 20 So

So shalt thou vow, thou never wilt disclose
Whate'er my friendship may in thee repose.

This said; each other's secrets to conceal
They swore; then Ariodant began to tell
His love's pursuit, and undisguis'd display'd 785
His tender contract with the royal maid.
Behold (he cry'd) the point my love has gain'd,
And none, I deem, has equal grace obtain'd.
I seek no other at Geneura's hand,
Till sanctify'd by Hymen's holy band: 790
'Twere vain to ask her more, whose virtuous mind
Leaves every maid in chastity behind.

When Ariodantes thus with truth declar'd
How far he deem'd his love might find reward,
Duke Polineffo, who with guile devis'd 795
To make Geneura by her knight despis'd,
Thus fraudulent pursu'd—Now hear me tell,
How far my happier chance can thine excel.
With thee she feigns, she scorns thy hated name,
And feeds with airy hopes thy boasted flame; 800
While every conscious month beholds me led
Full many a night to share her envy'd bed:
Judge, if thy favours can with mine compare:
Then yield to me, and seek some kinder fair,
Since love has crown'd my happier fortune there. 805

'Tis

'Tis false ! (thus Ariodant incens'd replies)
Thou hast profan'd her name with odious lies ;
And hast devis'd what thou hast said, to prove
If shallow tales can fright me from my love.
But since too much Geneura's fame they stain, 810
It fits, what thou hast spoken, to maintain.
This instant will I brand thee, ere we part,
A liar and a traitor in thy heart.

'Twere weak indeed (the treacherous duke reply'd)
A strife like this by combat to decide ; 815
When here I offer, what these lips have told,
Those eyes shall witness, and the truth behold.

Thus he : when Ariodantes' colour fled,
And scarce at length with faltering words he said ;
Whene'er these eyes Geneura's falsehood view, 820
(Attend me here my sacred oath renew)
Thenceforth I vow to leave her ever free,
So liberal found to you, so harsh to me !

This said ; my lover bade the rival knight,
Prepare that evening for th' unwelcome fight, 825

But Ariodantes now in thought divin'd
Some secret snare against his life design'd,
His brother was a knight of prudence sound,
Of all the court in arms the most renown'd.

Lurcanio call'd, and less, with him, he fear'd, 830
 Than if ten others on his side appear'd.

This gallant youth he bade his arms prepare,
 And led th' adventure of the night to share;
 But the dear secrets of his heart conceal'd,
 For these to him, nor none his lips reveal'd. 835

And now approach'd so near the destin'd place,
 As from the hand a stone might fly the space,
 He stopt Lurcanio there, and thus he said:
 When need demands it, hasten to my aid;
 And parting thence, th' appointed station took, 840
 And on the palace fix'd his anxious look.

Now, from a different part the traitor came,
 So ready to pollute Geneura's fame;
 The signal made (alas! I little thought
 The cruel guile by Polineffo wrought) 845
 Sudden I issu'd forth, no more conceal'd,

But stood in borrow'd garb to sight reveal'd,
 My vest was white, and richly to behold,
 Deck'd all around with costly fringe of gold;
 A golden net descending from my head 850
 With crimson flowers, was o'er my habit spread,
 And on my vest the moon resplendent play'd.

Then both the brethren, by the duke deceiv'd,
 The well-concerted fraud for truth believ'd.

Judge at that time what cruel pangs possess'd 855

The wretched Ariodantes' tortur'd breast.

Now Polineſſo came, and from above,

Receiv'd the wonted paſſport to his love.

We met—embrac'd—meantime th' unhappy knight,

Who ſtood ſpectator of this hated fight, 860

So deeply funk beneath the load of grief,

His ſoul reſolv'd from death to ſeek relief:

He drew the ſword, deſpairing, from his ſide,

And to his heart the fatal point apply'd.

Lurcanio (who ſurpris'd my lover view'd 865

Aſcend the gallery where diſguis'd I ſtood,

But knew not for the duke) advanc'd with ſpeed,

Soon as he ſaw his brother's frantic deed,

And ſeizing haſtily his furious hand,

From his raſh act the hapleſs knight reſtrain'd. 870

Ah wretched, ſenſeleſs brother! (thus he cry'd)

What rage has turn'd your better thoughts aſide?

Thus for a woman is your death deſign'd?

All falſe, as clouds that flit before the wind!

Since your own eyes have witneſs'd to her ſhame, 875

And ſeen how low ſhe prostitutes her fame,

O! let thoſe arms, againſt yourſelf employ'd,

Before the king her ſire her guilt decide.

When Ariodantes sees his brother nigh,
 He seeks no longer on his sword to die; 880
 With seeming calm he veils his secret pains,
 But still his former purpose fix'd remains.
 Departing thence, he with him bears the smart
 That gives no ease to his distracted heart.

At early dawn the palace he forsook, 885
 Nor leave of brother, or of friends he took:
 Eight days elaps'd; at length a pilgrim came
 With mournful tidings to the princely * dame,
 That Ariodantes in the sea had dy'd,
 Self-plung'd despairing in the roaring tide. 890
 Ere this last fatal act (the stranger said)
 He thus bespoke me, there by fortune led:

" Draw near, my friend, and be Geneura told
 " The hidden cause of what you now behold:
 " Tell her 'tis this, these eyes too much have seen, 895

" Ah! happy, if these eyes had never been!"
 By chance we then upon a mountain stood
 That tow'rs Hibernia bellies o'er the flood.
 Soon as he ceas'd to speak, I saw him leap
 From the high rock, and plunge into the deep. 900

Half dead with grief the news Geneura heard;
 A sudden paleness on her face appear'd.

H

* GENEURA.

O Heaven!

O Heaven! what did she, and what words she said,
When laid in private on her faithful bed!
She strikes her bosom, and her garment tears, 905
She rends with cruel hands her golden hairs;
Repeating oft what, with his latest breath,
Sad Ariodantes nam'd his cause of death;
That the strange issue of his fate was such,
His eyes in hapless hour had seen too much! 910

Soon was the fame o'er all the kingdom spread,
Of Ariodantes thus untimely dead,
Not with dry eyes the king his loss survey'd;
While pious tears each knight and lady paid.
At these unhappy tidings, o'er the rest 915
Heart-piercing anguish fill'd his brother's breast;
The peers assembled now, the time he took
T' address the throne, and thus indignant spoke.

Attend, my lord! while I the cause relate
That urg'd my brother to his hapless fate. 920
He lov'd the princess; (why should I conceal,
Or blush so pure a passion to reveal?)
And hop'd at length t' obtain her for his bride,
By numerous virtues, and by service try'd.
But while the faithful lover thus receives 925
The modest odour of the distant leaves,

He

He sees another to the tree ascend,
And from the boughs the blooming fruitage rend.

He said, and instant to the king display'd
The seeming crime, so late to fight betray'd, 930
Attesting that himself beheld the dame
Receive the secret partner of her shame;
Concluding, that he stood in fight prepar'd
To prove the truth of all his tongue declar'd.

Grief-struck the father heard, for well he knew, 935
Unless to her defence some warrior drew
To give Lurcanio in the field the lye,
He must his dearest child condemn to die.

As yet no champions in her cause appear,
Each views his fellow's face with marks of fear; 940
In arms so dreadful is Lurcanio's might,
That all, with terror, seem to shun the fight.
Her cruel fortune adds this sorrow more,
Her absent brother treads a foreign shore,
The brave Zerbino, who in field displays 945
Such deeds as merit ever-during praise:
But could he hear in time her dangerous state,
How would he fly t' avert his sister's fate!
That night, my home in private I forsook,
And fought, with anxious fear, the wily duke: 950

Declar'd

Declar'd how much to both it might import
That I without delay should quit the court.
He prais'd my prudence ; promis'd to provide
A safe asylum where I might reside ;
Appointing two, to guide me through the wood, 955
Where near, he said, his lonely fortress stood.
But secretly he gave my guides command,
Soon as their steps had reach'd this forest-land,
To take my life—lo ! how my faith was paid !
Too well his dire command had been obey'd, 960
Had not my cries so timely reach'd your ears :
Behold how Love his votaries prefers !

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

O R L A N D O

S E C O N D B O O K

T H E

THE
SECOND BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.

THE ARGUMENT.

CONCLUSION of Geneura's story. The king of Scotland grants Rinaldo the succours demanded. Rinaldo departs for England, and obtains the like succours from the regent there. Bradamant, seeking her lover Rogero, meets with Pinabello, and hears a melancholy tale of his misfortunes. She promises him assistance, and afterwards, being deceived by him, falls into Merlin's cave, where she meets with Melissa, an enchantress, who shows her in vision all her descendants, and instructs her how to deliver Rogero from the castle where he was confined by Atlantes. Bradamant, following the advice of Melissa, defeats the magician and sets his prisoners at liberty; but soon after loses her lover Rogero, who is carried away in a wonderful manner, by the contrivance of Atlantes.



THE
SECOND BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.

THUS to the Paladin Dalinda told
Her mournful tale, while still their way they hold;
Then tow'rs St. Andrew's town with eager haste
Rinaldo with the squire and damsel pass'd;
The king and court were there; and there the strife
Must soon decide his daughter's death or life.

As nearer to the neighbouring town they drew,
They found a squire who gave them tidings new;
That a strange champion there in armour came,
Who undertook to clear Geneura's fame; 10
Unknown his cuirass, and unknown his shield,
His name and lineage from his squire conceal'd.
This heard, Rinaldo swift his way pursu'd,
And soon the guarded walls and gates he view'd.

But

But none the warrior's entrance here oppos'd, 15
 The porter open'd, and the gate re-clos'd;
 Through the void city pass'd the fearless knight;
 But, by the way, he made the dame alight;
 And bade her wait the issue of the fight. }

Impatient thence he hastens to the field, 20
 Where the two knights their wrathful weapons wield;
 Who many blows had given on either part:
 There fought Lurcanio with revengeful heart
 Against Geneura; while the stranger's hand
 With equal courage well her cause maintain'd. 25
 With these, six warriors in the list appear
 On foot; the cuirass on their breast they wear.
 Albania's duke there holds his honour'd place,
 And reins a mettled steed of generous race:
 To him, as to high constable, they yield 30
 To keep the order of the list'd field:
 Fierce were his looks, exulting in his thought,
 To see Geneura in such danger brought.

Through the thick press Rinaldo forc'd his way;
 No multitudes Bayardo's course could stay: 35
 Those, who the tempest of his coming found,
 Were little slow to give the courser ground.
 Rinaldo, eminent above the rest,
 Appear'd the flower of chivalry confest:

Till,

Till, near the king arriv'd, he silence broke,
All listening round to hear the words he spoke.

My noble lord, (the champion thus began)
The hands of yonder combatants restrain.

Whoe'er shall perish in the doubtful strife,
Must undeserv'd resign a valu'd life.

One thinks himself by justice only led,

But treason o'er his sense a mist has spread:

The other knows not yet if wrong or right

Attend his cause, but issues to the fight,

The courteous prowess of his arm to try,

Rather than let such matchless beauty die.

Lo! here I come to give the guiltless aid,

Avenging on the traitor, the betray'd:

But first, command that each his rage forbear,

Then audience give to what I shall declare.

The king was mov'd with what Rinaldo said,

Both by his words and noble presence sway'd;

Then, stretching out his hand, commands the peace,

And bids awhile the combatants to cease:

When to the king, and barons of the land,

The knights, and populace on either hand,

Rinaldo all the subtle snare display'd

By Polinesso for Geneura laid.

VOL. I.

E

Now

Now Polineſſo, ſummon'd to the place,
Appear'd with deep confuſion in his face; 65
But boldly yet the guilty charge deny'd:
Soon ſhall we (ſaid Rinaldo) this decide.

Thus, ready arm'd, the liſt prepar'd in view,
They both, without delay, to combat drew.

Thrice ſounds the trump, and at the warning blaſt, 70
His lance in reſt the trembling traitor plac'd.
To him oppos'd Rinaldo came, and try'd
At one fierce courſe the conflict to decide.
Nor err'd the weapon from the knight's intent,
But through th' accuſer's panting boſom went: 75
Pierc'd through and through, he, by the dreadful force,
Was borne to earth ſix feet beyond his horſe.

Rinaldo ſwift diſmounts; and, as he lies,
His helmet from the helpleſs wretch unties.
But he, unable more to wage the war, 80
For mercy then prefers his humble prayer;
And to the king, and court on every ſide,
Confels'd the fraud for which he juſtly dy'd.

While yet with weak and faltering words he ſpoke,
His utterance fail'd, and life his limbs forſook. 85

The king rejoic'd his much-lov'd child to ſee
From threaten'd death, and ignominy free.

But

But when, his helmet rais'd, he knew the knight,

(A face before no stranger to his sight)

With lifted hands his thanks to Heaven he paid, 90

That sent so fam'd a champion to his aid.

The knight, who first t' assist Geneura came,

(Unknown to all his country and his name)

Who, arm'd in her defence, had fought the field,

Remain'd apart; and all that pass'd, beheld. 95

But now the king desir'd his name to know,

And begg'd him from his casque his face to show;

That as his generous purpose claim'd regard,

He might with royal gifts such worth reward.

At length he lifted up the helm he wore, 100

Disclosing features oft disclos'd before.

Behold (he cry'd) the knight, whom late misled

By lying fame Geneura wept for dead:

Behold that Ariodantès, late the sport

Of winds and waves, return'd to Scotland's court. 105

Sick with despair and loathing vital breath,

I sought in whelming seas a welcome death:

But Heaven forbade—the tide my body bore,

And threw me senseless on the rocky shore.

A pious hermit there my life retriev'd, 110

His counsel sooth'd me and his cave receiv'd.

Geneura's danger soon my soul oppress'd,
 And Love resum'd his empire o'er my breast:
 I heard Lurcanio, by resentment sway'd,
 To Scotland's peers accus'd the hapless maid— 115
 Ah! could I see my once-lov'd princess led
 A wretched victim to the funeral bed!
 Ah me! (I thought) can love like mine behold
 The cruel flame her tender limbs enfold!
 Friends—brothers—all forgot—the fatal strife 120
 This hand shall meet, and guard her threaten'd life.
 Thus fix'd in my resolves, I chose with speed
 This fable mail and rein'd an unknown steed;
 And to the distant list my course pursu'd,
 And thus in arms against a brother stood. 125

He ceas'd: the king with joy the knight receiv'd,
 With joy he saw his child from fate repriev'd:
 Urg'd by his court, and at Rinaldo's prayer,
 He gave to Ariodant Geneura fair:
 Albania's dukedom, which the king again 130
 Receiv'd, the traitor Polineffo slain,
 Which ne'er could chance in more propitious hour,
 The fire decreed his daughter's nuptial dower.
 Rinaldo then Delinda's cause embrac'd,
 And pardon gain'd for all her errors past, 135

Who

Who weary'd with the world's unhappy state,
Now vow'd to Heaven her mind to dedicate:
Forfaking Scotland she to Dacia went,
And there her days in hallow'd cloisters spent.

Rinaldo then his embassy display'd, 140
To beg from Scotland and from England aid;
And shew'd, beside his monarch's earnest prayer,
How glory call'd them to support the war.
To this the king reply'd without delay,
That to the furthest limit of his sway, 145
His soul was ever ready to maintain
The empire's rights and weal of Charlemain.

The monarch spoke; and instant gave command
To levy horse and foot throughout the land;
Equips a numerous fleet to stem the tides, 150
And various stores for every need provides.

Now brave Rinaldo, hastening to depart
For England's realm, the king with grateful heart
To Berwick's town convey'd the valiant peer,
There, parting, shed for grief a tender tear. 155

The busy mariners their anchors slip,
And plough securely through the foamy deep
With rapid course, till silver Thames they gain,
Where first he mingles with the briny main.

Along the stream with oars and sails they fly, 160
Till London's stately towers salute their eye.

Rinaldo did from Charles and Otho bring
(Otho besieg'd in Paris with the king)

Commission to the prince, whose honour'd hand
By deputation rul'd the English land, 165

To raise supplies; and from fair Albion's coast
Embark for Calais' shore the friendly host,

To Charlemain and France a welcome aid:
The prince, who then the regal sceptre sway'd

In Otho's stead, to brave Rinaldo's name 170
Such honours paid, as Otho's self might claim;

Then, answering his demands, he summon'd all
The neighbouring forces that obey'd his call;

With those that in the subject islands lay,
To meet together on a certain day, 175

While these for France prepar'd their welcome aid,
Fair Bradamant to seek Rogero stray'd:

To her this gentle knight affection bore,
Who came with Agramant from Afric's shore;

And she, nor nurs'd in wilds, nor savage born, 180
Receiv'd not love like his with maiden scorn.

Soon as her valiant arm to earth had cast
Circassia's prince, a hill and wood she pass'd;

Then

Then reach'd a stream that trickling through the plain,
Gave cooling beverage to the drooping swain, 185
Where ancient trees enrich'd the peaceful scene,
And fenc'd from noon-tide heat the cheerful green.

Here, as the virgin turn'd her eyes aside,
On the fair bank a comely youth she spy'd:
Fast by the margin of the flood he lay, 190
The margin with a thousand colours gay.
Alone and silent in a pensive mood,
With steadfast gaze the crystal stream he view'd:
Not distant far a tree his courser held,
Aloft were hung his helmet and his shield: 195
His eyes were moist with tears, his head declin'd,
Sad indications of a troubled mind.

Urg'd by desire which prompts each generous heart
In others woes to bear a friendly part,
The virgin begs th' afflicted knight to show 200
His secret state, and whence his sorrows flow.

Thus he—Know, gentle knight, a valiant crew
Of horse and foot, in aid of Charles, I drew:
With me a damsel went, for whom my breast
Had long the powerful fire of love confess'd: 205
When, lo! we saw near Rhodan's rapid tide
A knight all-arm'd a flying steed bestride.

Soon as the robber view'd my blooming fair,
Swift as a falcon through the yielding air,
He flew, and seiz'd her trembling with dismay, 210
Then bore her sudden in his arms away:
Wild with my fate, I rov'd with frantic mind,
Careless of life, and left my men behind:
Six tedious days, from morn to eve, I pass'd
O'er many a pendent cliff and horrid waste, 215
At length a wild and lonely vale I found,
With hills and dreadful caves encompass'd round.
Here, in the midst, a wondrous rock I view'd,
On which a strong and stately castle stood,
That seem'd afar to shine like glowing flame; 220
Nor harden'd earth, nor stone compos'd the frame.
This fort, the demons, from th' infernal plains
By fuming incense drawn and magic strains,
Enclos'd with steel, to which the Stygian wave,
And Stygian fire eternal temper gave: 225
A dazzling polish brighten'd every tower,
Which spots could ne'er defile nor rust devour.

The robber scours the country day and night,
Then, with his prey, he thither bends his flight:
Thither my fair, my better part he bore, 230
And never, never must I view her more!

What

What hope remain'd ! In vain with longing eyes,
I see the place where all my treasure lies !

The rock so high and steep, who enters there,
Must learn to wing his passage through the air. 235

While in suspense I stood, from far I spy'd
Two champions and a dwarf that seem'd their guide ;
These warriors both, and chiefs of mighty fame,
A monarch one, Gradasso was his name ;
The other was a youth of courage prov'd, 240
Roger, in Biserta's court belov'd.

They come (declar'd the dwarf) to try their power
Against the lord of this enchanted tower.

Then I—Vouchsafe, O generous knights ! to hear
A wretch's fond complaints with pitying ear ; 245
And if in fight your arms victorious prove,
(As sure I trust they shall) restore my love.

Meanwhile the warriors to the rock drew nigh,
Disputing who should first th' adventure try.

At length Gradasso (whether lots design'd, 250
Or else Roger to his will inclin'd)

Lifts to his mouth the horn : the cliffs around,

The rock and fortress to the noise resound :

When, lo ! the magic knight, with instant speed,

Rush'd from the portal on the flying steed. 255

At

At first he seems by slow degrees to rise :
Like cranes, prepar'd to sail to foreign skies.
Then ere Gradasso can perceive his flight,
He feels the spear with dreadful strength alight :
The spear breaks short ; Gradasso strikes again ; 260
But furious strikes the yielding air in vain.
The stern magician fearless on the wind
Ascending, leaves the champions far behind.
The good Alfana, with the force oppress'd,
Reclin'd on earth awhile the shock confess'd ; 265
Alfana was the mare Gradasso rein'd,
The fairest beast that ever knight sustain'd.

And now the forc'er mounts the starry skies,
Then wheels around, and down again he flies ;
Now on Rogero falls, who seeks to bring 270
His needful succour to th' astonish'd king.
The swift assault disturbs the youthful knight,
While scarce his horse supports th' unequal fight ;
And when he turns to strike, he sees the foe
Ride on the clouds and mock the frustrate blow. 275

Thus did these three the doubtful strife maintain,
That high in air, these lowly on the plain ;
Till rising night her dusky veil display'd,
And wrapt each object in surrounding shade.

On

On his left arm the foe was seen to wield, 280
Clos'd in a filken case, a mighty shield;
Whose polish'd orb, emitting magic light,
In death-like slumber seals the gazer's sight.
Bright as Pyropus shines the buckler's blaze;
No mortal e'er beheld such dazzling rays: 285
Full in their eyes the flashing splendor play'd,
And prone on earth each knight was senseless laid.
Like theirs, a sudden sleep my senses bound;
But when, at length, recovering from the ground
I rose, and fought the knights and dwarf again; 290
Dark was the mount and desolate the plain!
Th' un pitying foe had seiz'd the hapless pair,
And borne them to his castle through the air.
Thus by the light, that o'er their eyes he spread,
Their liberty is gone, my hopes are fled! 295
Now judge, what woes with mine can equal prove,
Of all the various woes that spring from love.

Thus said the knight, and thus his fortune mourn'd,
Then pensive to his silent grief return'd:
This was that earl, whose birth Maganza claim'd, 300
Anselmo's son, and Pinabello nam'd;
Who, like his race for wicked actions known,
Increas'd his kindred vices by his own.

When

When lov'd Rogero's name the virgin heard,
By turns a gladness in her looks appear'd; 305
By turns her bosom glow'd with anxious pain,
And oft she begg'd to hear the tale again.

Then full inform'd: Sir knight (she cry'd) give o'er,
This unavailing grief, and mourn no more:
Haste; to the castle be our course address, 310
Whose walls are with so rich a treasure blest:
Nor shall we find in vain our labour spent,
If favouring fortune answer my intent.

And shall I, then, your luckless feet to guide,
Again those mountains pass? (the youth reply'd) 315
For me, indeed, but little were the smart
To toil my body, having lost my heart.
Yet why should you steep rocks and barren plains
Thus rashly tread, to purchase slavish chains?
But, warn'd in time, if evil chance ensues, 320
Not me unjustly, but yourself accuse,

Thus having said, he mounts without delay
To lead the noble damsel on the way;
When lo! a messenger that swiftly rode,
Pursu'd them close behind, and call'd aloud: 325
The same, who told king Sacripant the force
Of Bradamant had hurl'd him from his horse;

Who

Who from Montpelier and Narbona came,
With sudden tidings to the martial dame,
That all the land was kindled with alarms, 330
And all the coast of Acquamort in arms.

These tidings heard, a doubtful pause ensu'd,
And undetermin'd for awhile she stood :
On that side honour and her friends assail'd ;
On this the stronger fires of love prevail'd. 335
At length resolv'd to end the task design'd,
And free Rogero in the tower confin'd ;
The damsel first excus'd a short delay,
Then sent the messenger well-pleas'd away.

Now, turning round, her former path she took ; 340
Her Pinabel pursu'd with alter'd look ;
For anxious fears perplex'd his troubled mind,
Left she should know him of Maganza's kind.
An ancient feud between these houses reign'd,
And oft their mutual blood the earth distain'd. 345
Then Pinabel bespoke the virgin knight :
The western sun withdraws his fading light ;
Beyond that hill, unless my mem'ry fail,
There stands a stately castle in the vale :
Here patient wait, while from yon height I try 350
T' explore the prospect with a surer eye.

So

So saying, to the hill he bent his course,
And up the steepy summit spurr'd his horse;
When sudden here a monstrous cave he found,
Hewn out with labour in the stony ground: 355
Full thirty cubits deep it seem'd in show:
A fair and lofty gate appear'd below,
Which through the shade a glimmering brightness gave,
As of a torch that burnt within the cave.

While doubtful here he stood, a sudden thought 360
Of treacherous purpose in his bosom wrought:
He makes the damsel from her steed alight,
And, pointing out the cavern to her sight,
Tells her within its confines he had seen,
A dame of beauteous face and graceful mien; 365
Whose courtly looks and costly garments show'd
Her birth deriv'd from no ignoble blood:
But from her eyes she pour'd a tender shower,
And seem'd her lost condition to deplore.
And when he thought t' attain a nearer view, 370
And learn the cause from which her grief she drew,
One from the inner grot with fury came,
And seizing carry'd off the weeping dame.

The dauntless Bradamant, whose generous mind,
Unconscious of the wile the wretch design'd, 375
With

With ardor glow'd to give the fair one aid,
Revolves how best she may the cave invade;
When on a lofty elm she cast her eyes,
And midst the boughs a mighty branch espies:
This with her sword she hews, and lops the leaves, 380
That done, the cavern's mouth the pole receives.
She prays her treacherous guide aloft to stand,
And grasp the end, tenacious, in his hand.
Now first within the cave her feet descend,
While as she sinks, her arms her weight suspend: 385
When Pinabello, scoffing, ask'd the maid
To leap below—then loos'd his grasp, and said:
O! would that all thy race with thee were join'd,
That thus I might at once destroy the kind.

But happier fortune than the traitor meant, 390
All-gracious Heaven, to save the guiltless, sent:
The pole first lighted on the ground below,
And instant shiver'd with the forceful blow.
The traitor deem'd her in the cavern dead,
And, with a visage pale through guilty dread, 395
The place, polluted by his crime, forsook,
Then instant speeding back, his courser took:
That every action might his soul betray,
He with him bears the virgin's steed away.

Soon as the maid again from earth was rais'd, 400
With the hard shock and sudden fall amaz'd,
She enter'd boldly through the gate, which gave
An entrance to the second, larger cave.
The building, square within, and spacious made,
A stately temple to the sight display'd. 405
Magnificent the sumptuous pile appear'd,
On pillars fair of alabaster rear'd.
An altar in the midst; and kindled bright,
A lamp before, cast round a trembling light.

Soon as the damsel view'd, with pious mind, 410
This sacred place for holy rites design'd,
Devoutly on her knees the earth she press'd,
And to the king of Heaven her prayers address'd.
Meantime a sudden jarring sound was heard,
When from a narrow gate a dame appear'd, 415
Ungirt, with feet unshod, with hair display'd,
Who, by her name address'd the warrior-maid.

And thus—O generous Bradamant! (she said)
Not without Heaven's appointment hither led:
Behold this ancient cave, by Merlin wrought, 420
Merlin in every art of magic taught:
Here, with bewitching looks and wiles prepar'd,
The lady of the lake his heart ensnar'd:

His

His sepulchre is here, whose womb contains
The deathless spirit and decay'd remains: 425

To this he by her blandishments was led,
And what receiv'd alive, detains him dead.

His living soul must with his corse repose,
Till the last trump the fatal angel blows.

His voice survives, and oft is heard to come 430
In tuneful music from the marble tomb.

Melissa view, that long has here remain'd
For thee I travell'd from a distant land;

Since he, whose sage predictions never ly'd,
This hour for thy arrival prophesy'd. 435

She said; and Amon's daughter, while she spoke,
With silence heard, amazement in her look;

When casting on the ground her bashful eyes,
She to the dame with modest grace replies.

Alas! what praise has my unworthy name, 440
That prophets my arrival should proclaim?

Then rapt with joy at such a blest event,
Silent she follow'd where the matron went,

Slow leading to the tomb, in which detain'd
The ghost of Merlin with his bones remain'd. 445

Scarce o'er the threshold pass'd the warrior-dame,
And to the cavern's deep recesses came,

When from the breathless clay in pleasing strain,
T' accost the fair the spirit thus began.

May fortune all thy just endeavours aid, 450
O ever chaste, and ever honour'd maid!
From whose glad womb must spring the fruitful race
That Italy, and all the world shall grace!
Hence to fulfil what Heaven has long decreed,
For which 'tis doom'd thou shalt Rogero wed, 455
Boldly pursue the ardor of thy soul,
Nor think that aught can thy desires control;
For he who keeps thy knight in captive bands,
Shall sink oppress'd beneath thy conquering hands.

Here ceas'd the voice; the matron now prepares 460
To show to Bradamant her destin'd heirs.
Then, in the temple, by her side she plac'd
The warlike fair, but first a circle trac'd;
And, to defend her from the spirits, spread
A magic covering o'er the virgin's head: 465
She bade her silent stand, then op'd a book,
In which she read, and with the demons spoke.

Lo! from the outward cave they rush'd to view,
And, thickening, round the sacred circle drew;
But all attempts to enter fruitless found, 470
As if a fosse or rampart stretch'd around.

Then

Then in the cavern, where the shining tomb
Contain'd the holy relicks in its womb,
The demons enter'd, when, in order due,
They thrice had circled round in fair review. 475
While, as they pass'd, the sage divining maid
Their names, their manners, and their deeds display'd.
Soon as she found the damsel thus dispos'd,
Her magic book the learn'd enchantress clos'd:
At once the phantoms shrunk to viewless night, 480
And all the vision vanish'd from the sight.

Till morn the virgin in the cave remain'd,
With sage discourse by Merlin entertain'd,
But when the sun his glowing beams display'd,
She left the fable subterranean shade; 485
And now, ascending, reach'd a desert place
With savage hills, untrod by human race.
The live-long-day, unresting, they pursu'd
Their course, and many a rock and torrent view'd,
Still, as they went, endeavouring to allay 490
With sweet discourse the labours of the way.
But chief the prophetess instructs the maid
What means may best th' imprison'd champion aid.
T' oppose th' enchanter's arts on me rely,
Nor can the world an aid like this supply. 495

King Agramant a ring of great import
Has given Brunello of Biferta's court,
This ring, that grac'd a royal virgin's hand,
Can every fraud of magic power withstand.
Brunello, skill'd and crafty in deceit, 500
His monarch sends to work a hardy feat,
That, by his cunning and enchanted ring,
He from the castle may Rogero bring,
Whom much the king esteems—but shall he owe
His freedom to a Pagan, and our foe? 505
Three days your course along the shore pursue;
(The shore will soon appear before our view)
The third your steps will to the dwelling bring,
Where you shall meet the man that wears the ring.
His stature (keep the picture in your mind) 510
Is not six spans, his head to earth declin'd,
Dark is his tawny skin, and black his hairs;
On his pale face a bushy beard he wears:
His eyes are swoln; his squinting looks aside;
His eye-brows staring, and his nostrils wide: 515
His dress, which gives you all the man complete,
Is short and strait, and for a courier meet.
Go where he leads—and mark my words aright,
Soon as the rock appears before your sight,

Your

Your fix'd resolves let no entreaty shake, 520

But seize the wretch, his forfeit ring to take.

Thus speaking; to the shore at length they drew,
Where Bourdeaux and Garonna rose to view;

And here, but first some tender tears they shed,

They parted as their different purpose led. 525

Duke Amon's daughter, whose impatient breast

Rogero fill'd, her eager journey press'd,

Till at an inn at length she ceas'd her way,

And saw Brunello there at close of day.

Full well she knew the man she sought to find, 530

So well his form was treasur'd in her mind.

While watchful on his hands her eye she bends,

And every look and every word attends,

She sees the host and all the household high,

Gazing aloft, as when the vulgar spy 535

A dark eclipse or comet in the sky.

And now a wondrous sight the virgin saw,

(A wondrous sight surpassing nature's law!)

A courser through the air direct his flight,

Who bore upon his back an armed knight, 540

Large were his wings, with different colours grac'd,

And in the midst the magic knight was plac'd:

His shining arms of polish'd steel appear'd,

And tow'rd the western skies his course he steer'd;

Till, sinking, he behind the mountains flew: 545

Then thus the host—Yon flying warrior view,

Who cuts through fields of air his rapid way,

And every beauteous damfel makes his prey.

High on a rock this lawless robber dwells,

Where stands a fort of steel, whose frame excels 550

Whate'er, of wondrous, old tradition tells.

Full many knights have sought the place in vain,

For none could boast they e'er return'd again.

Then thus the warrior-dame—Let one be found

Whose steps may guide me to this fatal ground: 555

For know I burn with rage to prove my might

On this magician in adventurous fight.

Thou shalt not want an aid (Brunello cry'd)

Behold myself I proffer for your guide.

Each maze and tangled wood I can display, 560

With many secrets to beguile the way.

With grateful thanks I take you for my guide,

In hopes to gain the ring, the maid reply'd.

The host a courser brought the virgin-knight,

Apt for the road, and strongly limb'd for fight: 565

On this she mounted and her way pursu'd,

Soon as the rising morn the day renew'd.

From steep to steep, from wood to wood they pass'd,

Till fam'd Pyrene's hills they reach'd at last;

From

From whose high summit shew'd a rough descent, 570
That winding to the lower valley went;
Where, in the midst, a rocky mountain stood
On which aloft the walls of steel they view'd.
Behold th' enchanter's tower (Brunello said)
In which the knights and dames are prisoners made. 575

Hewn in four equal sides, the mountain rose
Above the plain; nor path nor step it shows
T' assist the feet; but seem'd a place design'd
For some strange animal of winged kind.
Here, while Brunello unsuspecting pass'd, 580
The wary virgin seiz'd, and bound him fast
To a strong trunk beneath the beech's shade;
But from his finger first the ring convey'd.
In vain his every art Brunello tries,
And begs his freedom with unmanly cries: 585
She leaves him; and, with steps secure and slow,
Forfakes the hill, and seeks the plain below;
Then winds her horn, that echoes to the skies,
And boldly to the field her foe defies.

Nor long she stays, the fierce enchanter hears, 590
And, issuing from the castle-gate, appears:
But Bradamant beheld with secret joy,
Her foe no weapons in the field employ:

Nor lance, nor heavy mace, nor sword he wore,
To bruise the armour, and the corset bore. 595
On his left arm was brac'd a mystic shield,
Whose wondrous orb a crimson veil conceal'd:
His right hand held a book, and while he read,
Illusive phantoms round his foes he spread:
With spear or sword he seem'd to urge the fight; 600
And oft had dazzled many a warrior's fight,
But no illusion was his flying steed;
A griffin and a mare the mingled breed
Compos'd; and like his fire his feet before,
His head, his feathers, and his wings he wore; 605
(In all the rest his mother-mare was shown)
And by the name of griffin-horse was known.
Such, though but rarely, in those hills appear,
Beyond where ocean feels the freezing year.
Thence had the enchanter drawn him by his skill, 610
And made him soon obedient to his will:
Against the virgin nought avail'd his art,
Such virtue could the sacred ring impart.
And now she seems enrag'd to strike the wind;
Now darts before; then swiftly turns behind. 615
At last (for so Melissa's words requir'd,
To win the palm which most the maid desir'd)

In

In fury from her steed she seems to light,
And eager on her feet pursue the fight.
This seen, the necromancer from his shield 620
Removes the covering that the light conceal'd:
Soon as she saw the magic beams expos'd,
She fell, each eye in seeming slumber clos'd.
Her wile succeeding, swiftly wheeling round,
The flying horseman lighted on the ground: 625
On foot he leapt, and left his shield behind,
Ty'd to his saddle, in the veil confin'd,
Then hasten'd where th' expecting damsel lay;
(So waits a wolf to make the kid his prey;)
While, on the plain neglected, he forsook 630
(With which he wag'd the war) his magic book.
Now with a chain to bind his foe he thought,
A chain prepar'd, for such a purpose brought;
But here an unexpected difference found;
The noble damsel hurl'd him to the ground; 635
He far unfit a strife like this to wage;
She strong in youth, and he unnerv'd with age.
Now Bradamant her conquering weapon spread,
And from his shoulders thought to part his head;
But pity pleading for her vanquish'd foe, 640
She mark'd his features worn with age and wo,
Who

Who by his silver locks and reverend mien,
Of many an annual fun the course had seen,
Meantime a new desire possess'd the dame,
To learn th' enchanter's country, and his name; 645
And what he by that rocky tower design'd,
Built in a wild, to ravage all mankind.

Alas! for no ill purpose (thus replies
The old enchanter, mingling tears and sighs)
On yon steep rock I built my settled home, 650
Nor avarice makes me round the country roam;
But fond parental fears my soul incite,
To save from peril great a gentle knight,
Long threaten'd by his stars, in Gallia's land
To die a Christian by a treacherous hand. 655
A youth like this, for looks and courage bold,
Ne'er did the sun 'twixt either pole behold;
Rogero call'd: his infancy with care
I nurs'd: Atlantes is the name I bear.
Desire of fame, but more his cruel chance, 660
With Agramant allur'd his step to France;
While I, who love him with a parent's love,
Sought him from France and danger to remove:
For this alone I rais'd the stately tower,
To keep Rogero's life from fortune's power: 665

With gallant dames and knights I fill'd the place,
With many others of the noblest race;
That, though deny'd to leave this safe retreat,
Society might make his bondage sweet.

Alas! if like your gentle looks, you bear 670

A gentle heart, in pity hear my prayer.

That buckler take, which I with joy resign,

And take that flying steed which once was mine.

Nay, all my prisoners, if thou seek'st, receive,

So thou alone wilt my Rogero leave. 675

But if, alas! ev'n him thou would'st remove;

Before thou lead'st to France the youth I love,

Ah! let me by thy pitying sword be slain,

And free this spirit from her house of pain.

To this the maid—Thy fruitless plaints give o'er, 680

For know I will the captive knight restore.

Is then Rogero here confin'd with care,

T' avoid the threatening influence of his star!

O blind to fate! or, grant thou canst foresee,

What human power shall alter Heaven's decree? 685

But if thy present chance was ne'er foreshown,

How shall another's chance by thee be known?

Request not death from me; such prayers are vain:

Or if sincere thou seek'st to end thy pain;

Though

Though all the world denies, the noble mind 690
Can from itself its own dismission find.

But first set wide the castle gate with speed,
And let thy prisoners all from bonds be freed.

Now near they came, where on the rocky side
A narrow cleft the watchful virgin spy'd, 695
By which the steps, in windings from the mead,
To the high summit of the mountain lead.

Atlantes from the threshold mov'd a stone,
Where mystic signs and characters were shown:
Beneath were vessels, whence was seen expire 700
Sulphureous smoke that came from hidden fire.

All these the forc'er broke; and sudden grew
The country desert, comfortless to view!

As oft from nets the thrushes take their flight,
So swift the necromancer flew from sight; 705

At once with him, dissolv'd to empty air,
The vanish'd castle left the mountain bare.

Surpris'd, themselves the knights and ladies found
From stately rooms remov'd to open ground:

While many view'd their present state with pain, 710
And wish'd for pleasing slavery again,

Gradasso, Sacripant were there to see:
The knight Prasildo too, from prison free,

Who

Who with Rinaldo came from eastern lands:

Iroldo, join'd with him in friendly bands. 715

Here noble Bradamant with joy perceiv'd

Her lov'd Rogero, him for whom she griev'd;

Who; when he saw the beauteous maid, express'd

The grateful transports of an amorous breast.

From shameful bondage freed, the warriors came, 720

Where in the valley stood the conquering dame;

And where the wondrous courser they beheld,

That bore the buckler in the veil conceal'd.

Rogero now to seize his reins essay'd,

And near the knight the gentle courser stay'd. 725

This was 'Atlantes' work, whose aged breast

A thousand anxious boding fears oppress'd.

The youth from good Frontino leaps with speed,

(Frontino was the champion's generous steed)

And dares the strong-plum'd courser to bestride, 730

And claps his goring rowels in his side:

He runs awhile, till rising from the plain,

He spurns the ground beneath and soars amain.

So when the master gives the falcon way,

At once he shoots to seize the flying prey. 735

The maid, alarm'd, beheld with shuddering sight,

Her dear Rogero in this dangerous plight:

His

His course she follows through the distant skies,
While yet his course she reaches with her eyes,
Even when the distance leaves her eyes behind, 740
She follows still and views him in her mind;
Then, while her bosom heaves with tender wo,
And down her cheeks the tears unbidden flow,
Departing, takes Frontino by the rein,
In hopes to give him to his lord again. 745

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

THE
THIRD BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.

T H I R D B O O K

T H E A R G U M E N T.

ROGERO is carried by the flying horse to Alcina's island, where he finds a knight transformed to a myrtle, who gives him an account of his transformation. Rogero is opposed in his passage by a troop of monsters, and is afterwards accosted by two ladies belonging to Alcina: he defeats the giants Eriphila, arrives at the palace of Alcina, and is seduced by her allurements. Bradamant, being in great affliction for his absence, Melissa comforts her, and undertakes to deliver him. Rogero escapes from Alcina, and travels towards the country of Logistilla, in spite of all the obstacles raised to oppose him: beauties of Logistilla's habitation. Departure of Rogero on the griffin horse; he returns to Europe, visits England, and is present at a review of the forces raised to the assistance of Charlemain. He then passes near the island of Ebuda, where he sees Angelica exposed to be devoured by a sea monster.



THE
THIRD BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.

SWIFT flew the winged steed, nor knew the
knight
To rule the reins, or check his rapid flight,
While low beneath him, stretch'd in wide survey,
The varied earth's extended surface lay;
So far remote, that scarce his eye descries 5
Where the vales sink, or where the mountains rise:
The griffin steers to where in western streams
The sun descends when Cancer feels his beams:
He now has left Europa's climes afar,
A mighty space beyond that region, where 10
Unconquer'd Hercules, in ages past,
His boundary to wandering seamen plac'd.
At length he seems preparing, tir'd with flight,
In airy rings upon an isle to light.

There cultur'd plains and grassy hills appear, 15
Green meadows, flowery banks, and waters clear;
Delightful groves, where palms and laurels grew,
Cedars, and myrtles, pleasing to the view:

With flowers and fruits the orange stands between;
All intermix'd, a various sylvan scene! 20

Whose grateful shades afford a safe retreat
For shelter from the sun's meridian heat.

Amid the boughs secure, with fluttering wing,
The nightingales with tuneful voices sing;
While 'midst the roses red, and lilies fair, 25

For ever nurs'd by kindly Zephyr's care,
The nimble hares, in wanton mazes, play'd;
And stately stags with branching antlers stray'd:

Without the fear of hostile hands they stood
To crop, or ruminate, their grassy food. 30

Soon as the earth so nigh Rogero found,
To reach with safety, on th' enamell'd ground
With gladsome heart he leaps, but still detains
His flying courser by the straiten'd reins;
Till, 'twixt a laurel and a pine-tree plac'd, 35
He to a verdant myrtle ties him fast.

Near this a cool and crystal fountain flows,
Which fruitful palms and cedars round enclose.

His

His helm and buckler here aside he threw;
And from his hands his warlike gauntlets drew, 40
Now to the hills he turn'd, and now the seas,
Receiving in his face the kindly breeze,
Which gently in the oaks and beeches play'd,
Whose waving tops a pleasing murmur made.
Now in the limpid stream he bathes his lips; 45
And now his hands within the water dips,
To cool his throbbing pulse, and veins that glow'd,
Opprest beneath his massy armour's load.
Meantime his courser, struck with sudden fear,
As from some object in the covert near, 50
Drew startled back—to loose his bands he try'd,
And shook the myrtle where his reins were ty'd;
Shook with such force, as made the leaves around
Fall from the boughs, and strow in heaps the ground;
When writh'd with pain th' offended tree appear'd, 55
Till, groaning, from its bark these words were heard.

If pity in your breast can entrance find,
As sure your looks proclaim a courteous mind,
From my torn trunk unbind this monster's rein:
Enough my own afflictions give me pain! 60
Nor need, alas! external rage be shown
T' increase the woes I have already known.

Rogero started at the vocal found,
 But when his ears the wondrous speaker found,
 Amaz'd he hasten'd and his steed unty'd, 65
 His glowing face with flushing colour dy'd.
 Forgive my crime, whate'er thou art (he said)
 Or parted ghost, or goddess of the shade!
 Yet, gracious still, refuse not to declare
 Thy name that dost so strange a body wear, 70
 In which enclos'd a living spirit lies;
 So Heaven defend thee from inclement skies!

Rogero ceas'd; the trembling myrtle shook
 From head to foot, and thus in answer spoke.

A Paladin of France was I, by name 75
 Astolpho call'd, and not unknown to fame.
 Orlando and Rinaldo (who shall grace
 With mighty deeds the earth) partake my race;
 And, at my father Otho's death, the land
 Of England would have fall'n to my command. 80
 So fair was I, that many a damsel sought
 My love, till I my own destruction wrought.
 Returning from those isles, around whose shores,
 Remote from hence, the Indian ocean roars;
 Where good Rinaldo and myself, detain'd 85
 With others, long in prisons dark remain'd:

There,

There, as our way and cruel fortune drew,
One morn we chanc'd a stately tower to view,
And issu'd thence Alcina we espy'd
Alone, and standing by the ocean's side; 90
Where without hook or net, by magic power,
She drew unnumber'd fishes to the shore.
At her command, the dolphins left the stream;
With open mouths the mighty tunnies came;
The sea-calves, rising troubled from their sleep, 95
Forsook their beds, and hasten'd from the deep:
The monsters of the seas, tremendous whales
Above the water show'd their ample scales.
Now on my face she cast her eager sight,
And seem'd to view my features with delight, 100
Then, near advancing, with a smiling look,
With courteous, soft deportment, thus she spoke.

Sir knight! if you consent awhile to stay,
And kindly here vouchsafe to pass the day,
I'll show you, in the progress of my sport, 105
Of countless fishes every different sort;
Or if you would a Syren view, whose voice
With tuneful music makes the waves rejoice,
Hence let us pass, and reach yon neighbouring shore
To which she comes at this accusom'd hour, 110

As thus she said, a monstrous whale she show'd,
That seem'd a little island in the flood.
While I too rashly (which I now lament)
Believ'd her words, and on the monster went:
Rinaldo, Dudon, beckon'd, but in vain;
Not all their cares my rash attempt restrain.
Alcina, with a smile, my steps pursu'd,
And left the two as on the strand they stood.
The whale, instructed well in her design,
Began to move, and cleave the foamy brine:
Alcina sooth'd my fear, as all the day,
And next ensuing night, we held our way
Amidst the waves; at length this isle we gain,
Where false Alcina holds usurping reign,
And seeks to chace, with unremitting hate,
A blameless sister from her rightful state;
Fair Logistella, whose paternal lands
Had all been wrested from her virtuous hands,
But that a gulph her kingdom here defends,
And there a mountain's ridgy height ascends.
Alcina gave me nameless joys to taste,
And all on me her ardent passion plac'd:
France I forgot, each dearer care beside,
And love alone my amorous thoughts employ'd.

Her former lovers she esteem'd no more, 138
For many lovers she possess'd before:
I was her joy, was with her night and day,
And all the rest my high commands obey.—
But why recall those happy hours, and know
That every former bliss is turn'd to wo! 140
Too late, alas! I found her wavering mind
In love inconstant as the changing wind!
Rejected soon, I join'd the banish'd herd
That lost her love, as others were preferr'd.
Left these, o'er distant lands and nations spread, 145
Should e'er divulge the shameful life she led,
Some here, some there, her potent charms restrain
In various forms imprison'd to remain;
In beeches, olives, palms, or cedars clos'd,
Or such as me you here behold expos'd; 150
In fountains some, and some in beasts confin'd,
As suits the wayward fairy's cruel mind.
On you, fir knight, that in ill hour have found,
By ways uncommon, this enchanted ground,
Alcina every pleasure shall bestow 155
Of mortals lost in sensual bliss below;
But soon the general fate must be your own,
Chang'd to a beast, a fountain, tree, or stone.

Rogero, who Aftolpho knew by fame
 The valiant coufin to his beauteous dame, 160
 Much for his ftrange unheard-of fortune mourn'd,
 Whose form was to a fenfelefs myrtle turn'd;
 And for her fake, whose love his bofom fir'd,
 T' affift th' unhappy warrior much defir'd:
 But here his power no further aid affords 165
 Than kind confoling tears, and friendly words;
 He can no more!—and now he feeks to know
 If he to Logiftilla's lands might go,
 By any windings over hill or plain,
 To fhun the fnares of falfe Alcina's reign. 170
 A different path there lay (the myrtle faid)
 Which through rough crags and thorny thickets led,
 If to the hill he kept the better hand;
 But hard the pafs, for there a numerous band
 Of armed men were plac'd to guard the land. 175

His thanks Rogero to the myrtle paid,
 Then bade adieu, and parted from the fhade,
 Instructed well: he takes the reins to lead,
 But dares not mount again the flying fteed.
 Now, as he pafs'd along the ocean's fide, 180
 Alcina's ftately city he defcry'd;
 Then left the plain and beaten path, that ftraight
 Led o'er the meadow to the lofty gate;

And

And to the right, that tow'rd the mountain lay,
The warrior more securely took his way. 185
But soon an hideous crew oppos'd his course,
With savage fury, and with brutal force.
A crew so strange was never seen before,
That such deform'd and monstrous figures wore.
Some from the neck below appear'd like men, 190
While heads of apes and cats above were seen;
Some, running, stamp'd with goatish feet the road,
And some the shape of nimble centaurs show'd.
Lascivious youths were there, and old men mad;
Some naked, some in hairy vestments clad. 195
One, without reins, a speedy courser rides;
This, a slow ass; and that, an ox, bestrides:
Some on a centaur's back their seat maintain;
Some press the ostrich, eagle, or the crane.
The captain of the band was there beheld, 200
His face was bloated, and his paunch was swell'd;
Upon a tortoise heavily he sat,
And mov'd along the field in rardy state;
His limbs supported as he pass'd along:
Drowsy with wine his heavy eye-lids hung. 205
All these the knight on every side enclos'd,
All these in growing swarms his course oppos'd;

In

In vain with dauntless heart his sword he drew;
In vain he fought to force th' ungodly crew;
When sudden from the gate appear'd in sight 210
(Where shone the walls with golden splendor bright)
Two lovely dames, whose air and habit show'd
That not to lineage mean their birth they ow'd;
Nor seem'd brought up in humble cottage state,
But bred in rich apartments of the great. 215
Each on a beauteous unicorn was plac'd,
Whose snowy hue the ermin's white defac'd.
At once on every side disperse the bands:
The ladies to the knight present their hands,
Who now, with glowing cheeks, at their request, 220
To seek the golden gate his course address'd.

The ornaments that o'er the portal rise,
And jutting forward seem to meet the eyes,
On every side are richly cover'd round
With jewels, that in eastern climes abound. 225
Huge stately columns, by a master-hand
Of di'mond fram'd, the solid weight sustain'd,
So fair a structure ne'er before was seen
To fate the ravish'd eyes of mortal men!
Before the threshold wanton damsels wait, 230
Or sport between the pillars of the gate:

But

But beauty more had brighten'd in their face,
Had modesty attemper'd every grace.
In vestures green each damsel swept the ground,
Their temples fair with leafy garlands crown'd. 235
These, with a courteous welcome, led the knight
To this sweet paradise of soft delight;
Where festive pleasures every day employ,
Where every moment passes wing'd with joy.
No thoughts of hoary age depress the mind, 240
Nor care, nor want, can here an entrance find;
While, with her horn, obsequious Plenty stands,
To pour her riches forth from willing hands;
And with a smiling front, for ever clear,
Inviting April revels through the year. 245
Enamour'd youths, and tender damsels, seem
To chant their loves beside a purling stream.
Some, by a branching tree, or mountain's shade,
In sports and dances press the downy glade;
While one discloses to his friend, apart, 250
The secret transports of his amorous heart.
High o'er the beech and oak, with fluttering plume,
High o'er the lofty pine and laurel-gloom,
The little loves in sportive circles fly,
And view their triumphs with exulting eye: 255

One

One at a lover's breast his weapon aims;
With fraudulent art his net another frames:
Here in the stream they temper shafts, and there
On circling stone their blunted points repair.

A stately courser now was given the knight, 260
Of colour bay, and gallant in the fight;
His costly trappings, glorious to behold,
Were all with jewels deck'd, and shone with gold.
The old magician's steed, of winged kind,
A youth receiv'd, and slowly led behind. 265
The damsels who so late dispers'd the band
That durst Rogero's purpos'd course withstand,
Thus to the knight their gentle speech address'd:
My lord! your valorous heart, this day confess'd,
Has rais'd our courage from your hand to claim 270
A task that well befits your matchless fame.
Soon shall we come, where in our way there glides
A flood, that in two parts the plain divides:
A cruel wretch, we Eriphila name,
Defends the bridge and passage of the stream: 275
On all that tempt the pass she furious flies;
Dreadful she looks, a giantess in size!
Poisonous her bite, long tusshes arm her jaws;
And like a bear's her nails and shaggy paws:

Know,

Know, that the monstrous crew, whose fury late 280
Oppos'd your course without the golden gate,
Her offspring are; like her for prey they lust,
And like their dam are cruel and unjust.

Rogero then: Not one alone demand,
But ask a hundred battles at my hand. 285
Whate'er defence my prowess can afford,
Is yours—command my person and my sword:
'Tis hence, these shining arms my limbs enfold,
Not lands to conquer, or to purchase gold,
But to display to all my guardian care, 290
Much more to dames so courteous and so fair.

The dames return'd him thanks with grateful heart,
In words that equal'd well his great desert.
In converse thus they pass'd, till near they drew,
Where both the bridge and stream appear'd in view: 295
There they the guardian of the pass behold
With jewels blazing rich on arms of gold:
The ruby red, the chrysolite was seen,
The yellow topaz, and the emerald green.
Her giant bulk no common steed bestrode; 300
A mighty wolf sustain'd her ponderous load:
A wolf she rode; and o'er the river cross,
With stately trappings of no vulgar cost.

Rais'd

Rais'd on her creft, and in her targe ſhe held
A pictur'd toad with loathſome poiſon ſwell'd. 305
The damſels ſhow'd her to th' expecting knight,
Where, from the bridge, ſhe ſtood prepar'd for fight;
She bade Rogero turn: he nought reply'd,
But graſp'd his ſpear, and her to fight deſy'd:
Nor leſs the gianteſs, with active heat, 310
Spurr'd her huge wolf, and fix'd her in the ſeat;
And, as ſhe ran, her ſpear in reſt ſhe took,
While trembling earth beneath her fury ſhook:
But ſoon o'erthrown, ſupine her limbs were ſpread;
So ſtrong Rogero ſtruck beneath her head, 315
That, forc'd before the dreadful lance to yield,
Six feet beyond ſhe tumbled on the field.
Then ſwift he drew his falchion from his ſide,
Her head from her huge body to divide;
But here the ladies cry'd—Enough, fir knight! 320
No further urge the vengeance of the fight:
Behold her quell'd—then ſheath your conquering ſword,
Let us our way reſume, and paſs the ford.
This ſaid; they for a while their courſe purſu'd
Amidſt the covert of a mazy wood, 325
Thence through a narrow craggy path they went,
And reach'd at length the hill, with ſteep aſcent;
Where,

Where, on a spacious plain, the youth beheld
A sumptuous pile that every pile excell'd.
Here first of all her court Alcina press'd,
Impatient to receive the stranger guest.
Fair is the dome; but fairer are the train
Whose angel forms its stately walls contain!
Alcina yet excels the rest by far,
As Phœbus' rays obscure each feeble star. 335

Her matchless person every charm combin'd,
Form'd in th' idea of a painter's mind.
Bound in a knot behind, her ringlets roll'd
Down her soft neck, and seem'd like waving gold.
Her cheeks with lilies mix the blushing rose;
Her forehead high like polish'd ivory shows.
Beneath two arching brows with splendor shone
Her sparkling eyes, each eye a radiant sun!
Here artful glances, winning looks appear,
And wanton Cupid lies in ambush here: 345
'Tis hence he bends his bow, he points his dart,
'Tis hence he steals th' unwary gazer's heart.
Her nose so truly shap'd, the faultless frame
Not envy can deface, nor art can blame.
Her lips beneath, with pure vermillion bright, 350
Present two rows of orient pearl to sight.

Here

Here those soft words are form'd, whose power detains
Th' obdurate soul in love's alluring chains;
And here the smiles receive their infant birth,
Whose sweets reveal a paradise on earth. 355

Her arms well turn'd, and of a dazzling hue,
With perfect beauty gratify'd the view.

Her taper fingers long and fair to see,
From every rising vein and swelling free;
And from her vest below, with new delight, 360
Her slender foot attracts the lover's sight.

In all she did, her ready snares were hung,
Whether she spoke, or mov'd, or laugh'd, or sung.
No more Rogero can the myrtle trust,
No more believe her cruel and unjust. 365

Now, while they feast, the lute and tuneful lyre
Th' enraptur'd soul with harmony inspire:
Through the wide dome the trembling music floats,
And undulating air conveys the notes.

One with soft lays would tender bosoms move, 370
And paints the passions and the joys of love;
Or sweetly bids inventive fancy rise,
That brings poetic visions to the eyes.

Not all the festivals in story told,
By Syrian luxury prepar'd of old; 375

Not

Not that which Cleopatra's royal board
 With pomp display'd before her Latian lord;
 Could with this sumptuous banquet claim regard,
 Which for the knight th' enamour'd dame prepar'd:
 Not such is seen, when Ganymede above

380

His service ministers to mighty Jove

Whate'er can charm the heart, or lure the sense
 To full delight, these happy seats dispense:
 The feast, the game, the race, their joys enhance,
 The scene, the bath, the tilting, and the dance.

385

Now by clear streams, with grateful shade o'ercast,

They read the amorous lays of ages past;

Now 'midst deep vales or smiling hills prepare

To hunt the mazes of the fearful hare;

Now with sagacious dogs the bush they beat,

390

To rouse the whirring pheasants from their seat;

Now for the thrush fallacious springes set;

Now the sweet juniper with birdlime wet

Now with barb'd hook or meshy net they try

From quiet floods to drag the scaly fry

395

While thus Rogero lives a joyous guest,

A thousand fears disturb'd his fair one's breast;

But that enchantress, whose benignant mind

Reveal'd to Bradamant her race design'd,

VOL. I.

H

Who

Who lost in shameful peace the warrior fees, 400
In wanton feasting and luxurious ease,
Resolves through irksome ways of toil and pain,
To bring the youth to virtue's path again:
For old Atlantes fought from dangerous strife,
To guard in feats remote Rogero's life; 405
And rather wish'd him thus to lead his days,
Than change a year of shame for endless praise.
He sent him to Alcina's isle afar,
There to forget the sound of arms and war;
And, as a sage well vers'd in magic art, 410
He bound in chains so firm the fairy's heart,
She ne'er again her love should disengage,
Though good Rogero liv'd to Nestor's age.

From realm to realm Melissa thoughtful past,
And wandering Amon's daughter met at last; 415
When, struck with grief, th' unhappy virgin heard
Her lover prisoner, and his mind ensnar'd
With pleasure's poison'd bait: but soon to calm
Her breast, th' enchantress pours the healing balm.
Give me (she cry'd) the ring, whose powerful charm
The wearer shields from every magic harm: 421
Soon will I put Alcina's arts to flight,
Who now detains your lover from your sight.

Melissa

Melissa spoke; and to the listening dame
Her purpose told, to draw the youth from shame; 425
And send him back once more to France and fame. }

Then from her hand the noble damsel gave
The wondrous ring; nor this alone to save
The knight had given, but with an equal mind
Had sent her heart, and life itself resign'd. 430

She gives the ring, and to her care commends
Herself, her lover more; to him she sends
A thousand greetings that her truth display;
And, parting, to Provence directs her way.
A different path the sage Melissa pass'd; 435

And soon as evening-shade the skies o'ercast,
She rais'd a palfrey by her magic art,
With one foot red, but black each other part:
On this she mounted; both her feet were bare,
Ungirt her gown, and loose her flowing hair. 440

And thence so swift through yielding clouds she flew,
Next morn Alcina's isle appear'd in view.

Arriv'd, a strange illusion to the sight!
She adds a foot of stature to her height;
While every limb enlarg'd like his appears, 445

Who nurs'd Rogero in his infant years:

A hoary beard she fixes on her chin,
And fills with wrinkles all her wither'd skin:

So well she feigns his speech, his voice, his air,
It seems as if Atlantes' self was there. 450

Now, to her wish, she found the youth retir'd
To taste the freshness which the morn inspir'd,
Beside a stream, that from the hill's descent
To a clear lake with gentle murmur went.

His garments, with effeminacy made, 455

Luxurious sloth and indolence display'd ;

Wrought by Alcina's hands of silk and gold,

Mingled with art, and costly to behold.

A string of jewels from his neck he wore,

That, to his breast descending, hung before ; 460

And either warlike arm, that once could wield

The heaviest weapons in the dreadful field,

A bracelet bound ; in either ear he hung

A ring of golden wire, to which was strung

A costly pearl, whose price by far excell'd 465

What India or Arabia e'er beheld :

His curling locks, in nicest order set,

Wav'd round his head with liquid odours wet.

In old Atlantes' form th' enchantress stood

Before the youth, that form he oft had view'd ; 470

With that stern eye, and countenance severe,

Which, when a child, he us'd so much to fear.

Then

Then thus—Are these the glorious fruits at last
Of all my cares, of all my labours past?
Was it for this thy infancy I bred, 475
With marrow of the bears and lions fed?
Taught thee in gloomy caves, or forest lands,
To strangle serpents with thy tender hands?
Panthers and tigers of their claws deprive,
And tear their tusks from the boars alive, 480
That, after all, thou shouldst at length appear
Alcina's Atys or Adonis here?
'Twas promis'd from thy birth, when thou hadst gain'd
The ripening years which now thou hast attain'd,
That not a chief should match thy boundless praise—
And wouldst thou thus thy boasted trophies raise! 486
Thus wouldst thou rival Alexander's name,
Thus gain a Cæsar's or a Scipio's fame?
If, for thyself, shame cannot move thy mind,
Nor the great deeds that Heaven for thee design'd, 490
No longer from thy godlike race withhold
The future good my lips have oft foretold;
A race (so fate decrees) to mortal eyes
More dear than Phœbus' light that gilds the skies!
Nor blast the promis'd palms, which virtue yields 495
In peaceful councils or triumphant fields,

By which thy sons, and each succeeding name,
Shall give to Italy her former fame.

How has this queen thy fond affections won,
But thousands, like herself, the same had done? 500

Of all the numbers that her arts believ'd,
Thou know'st what recompense their loves receiv'd.

But that thou may'st Alcina's faith behold,

I will her frauds and each disguise unfold.

This ring receive, and to the dame repair; 505

Then mark if she deserves the name of fair.

She ceas'd; nor aught abash'd Rogero said,

But silent hung to earth his drooping head.

Soon as the wondrous ring his finger press'd,

Such deep remorse his conscious soul confess'd, 510

He wish'd that yawning earth would open wide,

His visage from the face of man to hide.

Her task perform'd, aside th' enchantress threw

Her borrow'd form, and stood disclos'd to view.

That maid, she cry'd, whose fond affections burn 515

For thee, and merit well a kind return;

To whom reflect what gratitude demands,

For freedom late recover'd at her hands;

This ring, a safe defence from magic art,

Here sends by me, and would have sent her heart, 520

If

If aught her heart avail'd to give thee aid :
The love of Bradamant she then display'd,
And, with her other noble virtues join'd,
Extoll'd the courage of her dauntless mind.
As when a child, who ripen'd fruit has stor'd, 525
In time forgetful of his former hoard,
By fortune to the place again convey'd,
Where many days before his trust was laid,
Beholds th' unthought-of change with vast surprize,
Obscene and putrid, hateful to his eyes ! 530
Rogerio thus, by sage Melissa sent,
When to Alcina's sight again he went,
For that fair dame, the fairest of the fair,
Whom late he left, now, wondrous to declare,
A shape so loathsome saw, that search around, 535
One more deform'd and old could ne'er be found.
Her face was wrinkled, sharp, and pale of hue,
Her hair was turn'd to grey, and thinly grew ;
Six spans in stature could she scarcely boast,
And every tooth her gums, disarm'd, had lost ; 540
As if her life more length of years had seen
Than Cuma's prophets, or Priam's queen.
Yet, by Melissa warn'd, he still suppress'd
The secret purpose of his wary breast ;

At length his arms he seiz'd, that long had laid 545
Neglected, and his manly limbs array'd;
But first, each light suspicion to remove,
He told Alcina he desir'd to prove
If, living thus a recreant from the field,
His hands could yet their wonted weapons wield. 550
Then Balifarda girding to his side,
So was his falchion nam'd, of temper try'd,
He took the buckler, whose enchanted blaze
Distracts the fainting eyes of all that gaze;
And with the silken covering o'er it hung, 555
The massy weight across his shoulders flung.
Then to the stall he went, and bade with speed
To fit the reins and saddle on a steed
Of coal-black hue: Melissa chose the horse;
For well she knew his swiftness in the course. 560
Him Rabicano nam'd, and once the right
Of fam'd Astolpho, with that hapless knight
Who late was fix'd a myrtle on the shore,
The watry monster to this island bore.
Rogero all the maid's advice pursu'd, 565
Who, still invisible, beside him stood;
Then from the fatal palace swift he rode,
That ancient harlot's infamous abode;

And

And with impatience to the portal fled,
That tow'rd the realms of Logistilla led. 570

The fatal tidings soon Alcina heard,
Rogero had escap'd and forc'd the guard;
At this such grief was o'er her senses spread,
That, for a time, her inmost soul was dead:
She tore her garments, and her face she bruis'd, 575
And oft of mad neglect herself accus'd.

Then swift to arms she summon'd all her crew,
When soon around her gather'd forces drew:
Of these two bands she fram'd, while one she sent
T' explore the path her lov'd Rogero went; 580

The other to the harbour took their way,
And there, with speed embarking, put to sea:
Their sails, unnumber'd, all the stream o'ercaft;
With these the desolate Alcina pass'd;
And so Rogero had possess'd her mind, 585
Her palace left without a guard behind.

This gave Melissa, plac'd in secret there,
An ample time her mischiefs to repair;
To free the wretches who had long remain'd
In hapless state, in cruel thraldom chain'd. 590

Around the palace, searching every part,
She saw the spells of her malicious art;

The

The magic seals from many a place she took ;
A thousand mystic forms and figures broke.
Then o'er each field she pass'd, each mead or grove ;
Where the sad victims of Alcina's love, 596
That hid in fountains, trees, or beasts, deplor'd
Their hopeless change, she to their shapes restor'd :
These, when they once their forms recover'd view'd,
The brave Rogero's steps in haste pursu'd 600
To Logistilla, parting thence in peace
To Scythia, Persia, India, and to Greece.
Astolpho then each manly grace regain'd,
And, by Melissa's means, his arms obtain'd,
With that fam'd lance of gold, which forc'd to yield
The strongest warrior in the venturous field. 606
This done, she mounts the horse that cuts the wind,
Then seats Astolpho on the steed behind,
And thence to purer seats directs her way,
Where Logistilla rules with virtuous sway. 610
Meanwhile Rogero pac'd along the strand
Beside the sea o'er tracts of burning sand :
The sun upon his arms its beams impress'd,
And his hot cuirass glow'd upon his breast.
The silent birds were hid in shades profound, 615
The grasshopper alone, with tedious sound,
While

While in the leafy shade conceal'd he lies,
Deafens the hills, the vales, the seas and skies.
At length, reclin'd beneath an ancient tower,
He saw three damsels landed on the shore ; 620
That late Alcina's sumptuous palace grac'd :
On Alexandrian carpets vases plac'd,
With wings and costly cates allur'd the taste.
Their bark attending at the strand was ty'd,
Where the calm waters gently lay'd its side, 625
In expectation till the sleeping gales
Should rise again to fill the flagging sails.

When near Rogero drew, whose lips appear'd
All parch'd with thirst, his face with dust besmear'd,
In courteous words the dames address'd the knight, 630
And begg'd him from his courser to alight,
With them awhile, in sweet retirement laid,
To rest his weary limbs beneath the shade.

And now prepar'd a smiling damsel stands
To hold his stirrup with officious hands ; 635
Another lifts on high the sparkling bowl,
And with a fiercer thirst inflames his soul.
But he, who knew the time forbade delay,
Regardless of their wiles, still held his way.

Thou art not (loud the dame indignant cry'd) 640
A knight, nor yet to gentle blood ally'd :

The

The arms thou wear'st, thy theft alone could gain ;
Thy theft alone that generous steed obtain :
Soon shall I see thee yield thy dastard breath
By caitiff hands, and by a shameful death : 645
Thy worthless ashes scatter'd to the wind—
Ingrate and proud ! the scandal of thy kind !

These words and more, from passions swelling high,
Rogero heard, but deign'd not to reply.

Then, with her sisters, where their vessel lay, 650
She went on board, and through the watery way
Urg'd all her speed, and hastening every oar,
Pursu'd his course along the winding shore ;
While her foul lips, accusom'd well to rail,
With every keen reproach his ears assail, 655

Now view'd Rogero, with a glad survey,
Where cross the narrow seas his passage lay
To Logistilla ; whence he soon espy'd
An ancient fire, that from the adverse side
Unmoor'd his bark : the bark Rogero takes, 660
And issuing to the sea the strand forsakes ;
Still as he pass'd discoursing with the sage,
By long experience taught and wise with age,

The pilot much extoll'd the youthful knight,
Who timely from Alcina took his flight, 665

T' escape her snares ; and now with purer thought
The virtuous domes of Logistilla fought ;
Whose everlasting joys such sweets dispense,
As feed the soul, yet never cloy the sense.
She will to nobler feats your thoughts advance, 670
Than singing, bathing, tilting, and the dance ;
Teach how th' expanded soul can mount on high,
Beyond the cloudy vapours of the sky ;
And how on earth the mortal part may prove
A taste of peace that crowns the blest above. 675

Thus speaking, through the flood the pilot steer'd,
While distant yet the safer shore appear'd :
When lo ! a numerous sail of ships they 'spy'd,
That with spread canvas skimm'd along the tide.
So swift their dashing oars the seamen ply, 680
To either land the frothy waters fly :
Resound the seas ; resounds each crooked shore,
And Echo, from her caves, returns the roar.

Now, now, thy magic shield, Rogero, show,
Or yield thy life, or freedom to the foe ! 685

Thus Logistilla's pilot eager cry'd,
And, at the 'word, he threw the veil aside,
Reveal'd the dazzling light, whose beams expos'd,
In darkness every hostile eye-lid clos'd :

Some

Some headlong quit the prow; while others fall 690
From the high poop: one sleep o'erwhelms them all!

A centinel, that on the watch-tower stood,
Beheld Alcina's vessels in the flood:
The bell then gave th' alarm—a warrior band
Pour'd from the fort and crowded all the strand; 695
Th' artillery from the walls its rage employ'd,
Which, like a storm, Rogero's foes annoy'd;
And thus from every part assistance came,
To save his life, his liberty, and fame.

Of beauteous form, four virgins trod the shore, 700
Whom Logistilla timely sent before:
Fair Andronica, first in valour plac'd,
The wise Phronesia, and Dicilla chaste,
With pure Sophrosyne, who ever press'd
In sacred virtue's cause above the rest. 705

Beneath the castle, in the sheltering bay,
A numerous fleet of ready vessels lay:
Thus either force once more to combat drew,
And both by land and sea the war renew.
Alcina, anxious to prevent his flight, 710
Not only lost her lover and her knight,
But from that fleet, whose countless sails display'd,
Cast o'er the subject seas a dreadful shade,

While on the rest the flames resistless fed,
Scarce with one bark, alone, escaping fled. 715

Rogero, disembarking, trod the shore
With grateful thanks to Heaven's protecting power,
And with impatient steps his way pursu'd
To where the fairy's stately palace stood.

Thick set with stones that dart their mingled rays, 720
The walls, with more than mortal lustre, blaze!

Not so the diamond shifts its trembling beam;
Not so the ruby flames with ruddy gleam.

On these immortal gems who turns his eyes,
Beholds the mind in all her colours rise; 725

Each fault, each virtue views; nor flattery's dress
Can blind his soul, nor envy's tongue depress.

Here rais'd aloft, on sumptuous arches high,
That seem'd the vast supporters of the sky,
Were spacious gardens, which for beauteous show 730
Might vanquish others stretch'd on plains below.

Amidst the shining battlements were seen
The trees, of odorous scent, with branches green,
Where the fruit ripens, and the blossom blows,
Through every season that the sun bestows. 735

No plants like these in earthly soils arise,
Nor autumn there such grateful shade supplies;

Like

Like these no violets or lilies bloom,
No roses breathe like these a rich perfume;
Here never-fading verdure clothes the ground, 740
And with perpetual sweets the flowers are crown'd.
Not that benignant Nature so ordains,
Or with a kindlier power their life sustains,
But Logistilla, by her skilful care,
Without the help of suns or genial air, 745
What to a vulgar thought may strange appear,
Maintains eternal spring throughout the year.

The fairy-dame her pleasure testify'd
To see with her so brave a knight reside:
While every one by her example strove 750
To show the warrior greatest marks of love.
Astolpho, who ere this her palace gain'd,
With friendly looks Rogero entertain'd;
Soon came the rest, who, in a happy hour,
Regain'd their shapes by sage Melissa's power. 755

Rogero and Astolpho now address
The dame with grateful thanks, and humbly press
Their fair dismissal thence: Melissa joins
The just request, and seconds their designs.

Then with herself the fairy counsel took 760
How best t' assist Rogero and the duke;

At length resolv'd the horse that soar'd in air,
 To Aquitanian shores the first should bear.
 She now prepar'd a bit, with curbing rein,
 To rule the courser and his speed restrain; 765
 This done, with care she next instructs the knight
 To guide with fearless hand his wondrous flight.

Then brave Rogero hasten'd to depart,
 But first his leave he took with grateful heart,
 And flying, left her pleasing seats behind, 770
 Her goodness ever treasur'd in his mind.

O'er spacious Quinsai he directs his way,
 Thence viewing Mongiana and Cathay;
 And now o'er Imaüs his course he takes,
 Then Sericana to the left forakes: 775
 Still more declining from the Scythian cold,
 To where th' Hircanian sea his billows roll'd;
 At length Sarmatia's ample realm he found,
 And, leaving Asia, entered Europe's bound;
 Till many a wide-extended region cross'd, 780
 He came at length to England's distant coast.

One morn he reach'd fair London's stately towers,
 And stay'd his course by Thames' far winding shores,
 Whose neighbouring meads display'd a mighty force
 Of hardy warriors, mingled foot and horse, 785

That to the martial life and trumpet's sound
In beauteous order stretch'd their ranks around.

The good Rinaldo these to battle led,
The first of knights, and of a host the head.

Rogero wheeling round, with swift descent, 790
Now ask'd a warrior what the concourse meant.

To him the courteous stranger thus reply'd:
These troops, whose banners all the country hide,

From Scotland, Ireland, and from England's soil
Arrive, and some from every neighbouring isle: 795

The ready vessels in the harbour stand,
To waft them safely to the Gallic land.

The powers of France, besieg'd by Pagan force,
In these supplies have plac'd their last resource:

All these that stretch along the eastern lands, 800
Compose the numbers of the English bands.

Now view the west, and forty thousand there
Of hardy Scotchmen wave their signs in air.

Yon lion, plac'd two unicorns between,

That rampant with a silver sword is seen, 805
Is for the king of Scotland's banner known;

Zerbino there encamps, his gallant son!

No form so graceful can your eyes behold,

For Nature made him, and destroy'd her mould.

The

The title of the duke of Ross he bears, 810
No chief with him for dauntless mind compares.

While thus Rogero sees the bands, and hears
The names and titles of the British peers,
First one, and then another with surprise
Approaching views his beast with steadfast eyes, 815

Amaz'd at such a strange unusual sight,
And soon the circle thickens round the knight.
He, swiftly mounting, soars upon the wind,
And leaves the gazing multitude behind;

Then, having past the soil of England o'er 820
From side to side, he reach'd Hibernia's shore,
And thence he rein'd his courser o'er the waves,
Where the rough tide the western border laves,
When, looking down, a doleful sight he spy'd,
The fair Angelica in fetters ty'd. 825

In those lone seas, beneath the distant skies,
Beyond th' Hibernian coast an island lies,
Eubuda call'd, on whose ill-fated ground
Th' inhabitants are now but thinly found.

This island's prince a daughter once possess'd, 830
With every grace and every virtue blest,
Whom sea-born Proteus to his love compress'd. }

Most hateful to her sire was this to hear,
Above all others impious and severe;

To nature deaf, his unrelenting breath 835

Condemn'd his hapless child to cruel death.

Proteus, to whom is given in charge to keep

The flocks of Neptune, ruler of the deep,

Indignant sent on shore his savage train,

The Phocæ, orcs, and monsters of the main, 840

That not alone their rage on herds employ'd,

But villages and husbandmen destroy'd.

To end this plague the oracle was sought,

And thence the deputies their answer brought.

"That Heaven requir'd them with unwearied care 845

"To seek a damsel, like the former, fair;

"A destin'd offering by the roaring tide,

"T' appease the God for her that guiltless died."

O! wretched females! in a luckless hour

By fortune cast on this ill-omen'd shore, 850

Where by the waves in cruel watch they stand

To seize on strangers with an impious hand:

To every port their vessels scour the main,

New victims for the sacrifice to gain.

A pinnacle sailing swift from land to land, 855

One morn approach'd a solitary strand

Where, fearless of surprise, the lovely maid

Unblest Angelica asleep was laid;

Who

Who lately fled Rinaldo's hated fight,
 And on an aged hermit chanc'd to light, 860
 Whose magic charms broke off the rivals' fight;
 Near the salt flood her lonely path she held,
 Where on the Gascon shore the billows swell'd,
 Till spent with toil, beneath a cavern'd shade,
 The wandering dame her weary palfrey stay'd, 865
 Where heavy slumber soon her eyes oppress'd,
 And every sense was lock'd in death-like rest.

Their anchor cast, the seamen stopp'd to bring
 Wood from the grove, and water from the spring;
 They seiz'd the sleeping fair, and with their prey 870
 Back to the strand again resum'd their way:
 To the high mast the bellying canvas strain'd,
 The vessel soon the mournful island gain'd.
 That morn the damsel on the rock was plac'd,
 To glut the monster of the watery waste, 875
 And on the shore her tender frame expos'd,
 As nature first her naked limbs disclos'd.

Rogero distant view'd, and viewing, thought
 Some lovely form, of alabaster wrought,
 Or purest marble, by the sculptor's hand 880
 Was fix'd with art to grace the desert strand;
 But soon perceiv'd midst animated snow,
 And roses red, the dewy sorrows flow,

Which trickling down her panting bosom stray'd,
While in her golden hair the zephyrs play'd. 885
Pity and love, by turns, his soul detain,
And scarce his kindly tears their course restrain:
He first his winged courser's speed repress'd,
Then gently thus the weeping maid address'd:
O damsel! worthy only of the chains 890
With which his captives conquering Love restrains;
Unworthy this, or any wo to find:
What wretch so harden'd, with obdurate mind
Could by the rugged force of iron bands
Compress the softness of those tender hands? 895
While yet he spoke, her rising blushes spread,
So polish'd ivory shows when stain'd with red:
Her face had from her hands concealment found,
But to the flinty rock her hands were bound.
Yet (all she could) a shower of tears she shed, 900
And strove to earth to bend her drooping head.
While mingled sobs and plaints her fate bewail,
A sudden noise prevents her mournful tale.
For, lo! the monster ploughs the watery field,
Half rais'd above the waves, and half conceal'd. 905
'As fearing Boreas' rage or Aufter's force,
The vessel to the harbour steers her course:

So hastening to his welcome prey is seen
The ravenous orc, and small the space between.
Rogero saw, but fearless at the sight, 910
Swift wheeling round began the dreadful fight.
The orc, who saw the winged courser's shade,
That here and there upon the waters play'd,
Forsook the certain helpless prey in view,
And raging at the empty shadow flew; 915
While, as he turn'd, Rogero sunk below,
And watchful ply'd with strokes his furious foe.
As when an eagle darting from the skies,
Amidst the grass a wandering serpent spies,
Or sees him on the sunny bank unfold 920
His azure glories and his scales of gold;
Eager to seize, yet cautious still, he fears
Where from his mouth the hissing tongue appears,
At length he gripes the prize, then spreads his wing,
Nor dreads the terrors of the forky sting. 925
Rogero thus, with sword and spear, pursues
Not where his teeth and threatening tusks he views;
But 'twixt his ears the forceful blow descends;
Now on his back, now where his tail extends.
Yet all in vain! his labour nought avails, 930
No steel can pierce th' impenetrable scales.

He now resolves the buckler to display,
And strike his senses with th' enchanted ray;
Then flies to shore, and first to screen the maid
(Whose naked limbs were on the rock display'd) 935
From the fierce light, he fixes on her hand
The ring that could the magic power withstand;
The ring, which noble Bradamant before
To save her lover from Brunello bore;
And next, to free him from Alcina's bands, 940
By sage Melissa sent to Indian lands;
This, with foreseeing care, he gave the dame
To screen her from his buckler's blazing flame;
And save those lovely eyes, whose soft regard
Already had his amorous heart ensnar'd. 945
Then swift he turns to where the monster press'd
One half the sea beneath his ample breast;
And, standing on the shore, the veil he rears,
When lo! another fun on earth appears!
As, when the skies with sultry vapours glow, 950
The panting fishes faint and sink below;
So, midst the billows of the deep, is shown
The hideous monster, horribly o'erthrown!
Rogero then no rest, no pause allows,
But plies him close with unavailing blows. 955
Ah!

Ah! turn (the damsel cry'd) and loose my chains,
Before the cruel orc his sense regains.

Ah! rather whelm me in the gaping flood,
Ere these poor limbs be made his trembling food.

Rogero, pitying heard, her chains he broke, 960
And from the cliff the trembling mourner took,
Then plac'd behind him on his steed he bore
The maid in safety from that cruel shore;
While with his fearless lord and lovely prize
The rapid courser cuts the yielding skies. 965

No more his voyage fills Rogero's mind,
He seeks no more the Spanish coast to find;
But to the neighbouring land his flight he guides,
Where lesser Britain breaks the briny tides;
Where branching oaks a peaceful covert screen, 970
And Philomela warbles through the scene.

Along the meadow pours a purling rill,
On either hand appears a lonely hill.

Th' enamour'd warrior here repress'd his speed,
And soft descended on the verdant mead; 975
His griffin's wings he now restrain'd from flight,
Those wings that never more must bear the knight!

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

And now (the banquet over) and from my chains
Before the break ere his knife begins
All makes will him in the gaping flood
For these poor limbs he made his murthering food.
Rogero, paying heed, her chains he broke,
And from the cliff the murtherer threw;
Then plac'd behind him on his foot he bore
The maid in fifty fathom's crystal sea.
While with his fearful lord and lovely prize
The rapid current cuts the jibbing waves.
No more his voyage fills Rogero's mind;
He seeks no more the Spanish coast to find;
But to the neighbouring land his flight he guides
Where better Britain breaks the rainy tides.
Where bracing oaks a grateful covert form
And Philomela warbles through the grove.
Along the meadow pours a purpling rill
On either hand appears a lonely hill.
The enamour'd warrior here repos'd his head,
And fast descended on the verdant mead.
His gnat's wings he now restrain'd from flight
Those wings that never more shall bear the night.
END OF THE THIRD BOOK

THE
FOURTH BOOK

OF
ORLANDO.

THE
FOURTH
BOOK
THE ARGUMENT.

ANGELICA, being saved from the monster, leaves Rogero by the help of her enchanted ring. Rogero loses his flying horse, and afterwards, being deceived by a magical appearance, is decoyed to the castle of Atlantes. Bradamant is once more instructed by Melissa to deliver him; and, being conducted by her to the place, is deceived, and detained in the same castle. Orlando, disturbed with a dream, quits the city of Paris, then besieged by Agramant, and goes out disguised in search of Angelica: he hears of the cruel custom of the people of Ebuda, and resolves to go against those islanders, but, being cast ashore by a tempest on the coast of Flanders, meets with Olympia, who relates her misfortunes. Orlando undertakes to recover her possessions, and revenge her on her enemy.



And with his golden
From her Brinello
Light by command of Agramant the king
Soon as the view'd and view'd with ravish'd eyes
The ring long lost, o'erwhelm'd with glad surprise,
She fears some empty dream her sense deceives,
And hence, by sight or touch, the truth believes.
Then from her hand the took with eager haste,
And twice her lips the shining circle plac'd,

And

THE
FOURTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.

NOW casting down by chance her bashful eyes,
Angelica upon her finger spies
The ring, which at Albracca from the dame
Brunello stole, with which to France she came,
When first the Christian camp her brother gain'd, 5
And with his golden lance such fame obtain'd.
From her Brunello stole the wondrous ring,
Urg'd by command of Agramant the king.

Soon as she view'd, and view'd with ravish'd eyes,
The ring long lost, o'erwhelm'd with glad surprise, 10
She fears some empty dream her sense deceives,
And scarce, by sight or touch, the truth believes:
Then from her hand she took with eager haste,
And 'twixt her lips the shining circlet plac'd,

And

And instant vanish'd from Rogero's sight, 15
Like Phœbus, when a cloud obscures his light.
The youth, abandon'd thus, with looks amaz'd
Around the mead awhile in silence gaz'd;
But when remembrance to his thoughts return'd
The magic ring, too late his loss he mourn'd, 20
Too late the chance bewail'd—Ungrateful maid!
Are thus (he cry'd) my services repaid?

So saying, by the fountain's side in haste
He search'd around, and oft in hope embrac'd
Her beauteous form, but when his arms would find 25
The fleeting fair, he clasp'd th' impassive wind.

Meantime Angelica at distance pass'd,
Till to a spacious cave she came at last,
In this his life an aged herdsman led,
Who numerous mares beneath the mountain fed: 30
Along the vales, in pastures green, they play'd,
By crystal streams that through the herbage stray'd;
Around the cave were stalls, to which they run
T' avoid the fervour of the mid-day sun.

Her dwelling here, unseen, the virgin chose, 35
Till day declin'd, and shadowy night arose;
Then, cheer'd with rest and food, no longer stay'd,
But her fair limbs in humble vests array'd;

Vests

Vests far unmeet for her, who once could boast
The richest garments wrought with skilful cost : 40
Yet through her lowly semblance beauty shin'd,
And grace that spoke her of no vulgar kind.
Let ancient bards no longer tune the verse,
Neæra's charms or Phyllis to rehearse ;
The sweets of Amaryllis to recite, 45
Or Galatea, lovely in her flight ;
Let Maro's shepherds cease their boasting strains,
Since India's queen without a rival reigns.

Around the vales the damsel cast a look,
And from the grazing mares the fairest took ; 50
For now a sudden thought inspir'd her breast,
Alone to travel tow'rd's her native east.

Awhile Rogero stay'd, in hope to view
The royal fair, that from his sight withdrew,
Again return ; but, ah ! in vain he stay'd, 55
Nor reach'd his fond complaints the absent maid.
Once more he purpos'd thence to steer his course,
And turn'd to where he left his winged horse ;
When there he found, so ill his fortune sped,
The reins were broken, and the courser fled ; 60
Loss heap'd on loss ! forlorn and wretched left,
At once of ring, of shield, of steed bereft ;

Thus

Thus punish'd for his faith so late betray'd,
 And love forgotten to the Dordan * maid;
 But most to lose his wondrous ring he griev'd, 65
 The wondrous ring from Bradamant receiv'd,
 Which less he valued for its secret power,
 Than for her sake whose hand the token wore.

With heavy heart he brac'd his armour on;
 His radiant targe behind his shoulder thrown; 70
 He leaves the sea, and through the verdant meads,
 All pensive, to a spacious vale proceeds;
 Then takes a path that 'midst the forest leads. }
 Not far he pass'd, ere, echoing from the right,
 Where thickest trees perplex'd the doubtful sight, 75
 A dreadful clash of arms he hears; he flies,
 And through the gloom two combatants espies
 With fury clos'd: a giant one is seen,
 A knight the other, and of fearless mien.
 This seems to dare the fight with sword and shield, 80
 And with undaunted skill maintain the field,
 Beside him lies his horse depriv'd of life;
 Rogero stands spectator of the strife:
 The knight he favours; but his noble mind
 Awaits to see how Fortune's lot inclin'd, 85

* BRADAMANT.

In

In silent gaze : at length a dreadful blow
The monster aims to crush th' unwary foe :
The club his helmet strikes ; on earth he lies ;
To end his life the cruel giant flies,
His helm uncloses, and reveals to sight 90
What to Rogero, in the prostrate knight,
Appears the roseate bloom, the golden hair,
And well-known features of the martial fair,
His Bradamant belov'd, that seems to lie
A victim by the giant doom'd to die. 95
At once the champion darts around his eyes,
And to the fight the furious foe defies :
But he, who seeks not to renew the fray,
Takes from the ground his senseless conquer'd prey,
And in his arms the prize resistless bears : 100
So with a wolf the lamb unpity'd fares ;
So the fierce eagle, while he soars above,
In his strong talons gripes the helpless dove.
Swift flew the giant, swift Rogero flew,
But scarce retain'd the monstrous foe in view. 105
At length they came ; where midst a plain appear'd
A stately pile of gold and marble rear'd.
Within the gate the towering giant pass'd :
Behind Rogero press'd with headlong haste ;

The portal entering (wondrous to the knight) 110
The maid and giant vanish'd from his sight.

While thus, by force of potent spells deceiv'd,
The generous youth these lying forms believ'd,
His faithful Bradamant in anxious wo
Still near Marfeilles annoys the Pagan foe, 115
That wide o'er hill and dale with plundering bands
O'er-run Provence and all the neighbouring lands,
Where the bright maid a great example gave
Of prudent leader, as of warrior brave.

Long has the time elaps'd that to her sight 120
Should once again restore her dearest knight:
One day, of many a day, retir'd to mourn,
She sees the dame without her lord return;
The dame, whose wondrous ring the med'cine bore,
To heal the heart that felt Alcina's power. 125
Swift from her cheek the fading roses fly,
And scarce her trembling knees their aid supply.

Soon as th' enchantress sees the virgin's fear,
She hastes to meet her with reviving chear;
Where every look such speaking comfort wears, 130
As his are wont who happy tidings bears.
Let no vain doubts (she cry'd) thy bosom shake,
Rogero lives, and lives but for thy sake;

Yet

Yet lives, compell'd his freedom to forego,
Again the prisoner to thy constant foe. 135
Now would'st thou seek him, mount thy ready steed
Without delay, and follow where I lead:
Soon shalt thou, virgin, well-instructed, see
The means to set thy lov'd Rogero free.

This said, she all the magic guile declar'd 140
Which for the knight Atlantes' arts prepar'd,
Who Bradamant's resembling features wore,
The seeming captive in a giant's power.
Soon as thy feet (she cries) shall reach the land
Where, near, the wondrous pile is seen to stand; 145
Th' enchanter shalt thou meet, who to thy sight
Will seem thy love, oppress'd by stronger might:
But lest, by magic guile, thou here should'st fall
In snares, that till this hour have fetter'd all,
Distrust thy sense, and when thou see'st him nigh, 150
Unsheath thy sword, and bid the traitor die.
Nor think of life Rogero to deprive,
But him from whom thy woes their source derive.
Hard must it prove to aim the mortal blow
On him whose looks thy knight's resemblance show: 155
Yet ne'er to thee shall Fate Rogero give,
If through thy weakness now thy foe should live.

The warlike virgin, with determin'd will
To free her lover and the forcerer kill,
Appears in arms, impatient to pursue 160
Her guiding course whose truth so well she knew.
Melissa leads her thence, with eager haste,
O'er many a cultur'd land and dreary waste,
Thro' wood and lawn; while sage discourse beguiles
The tedious journey and relieves their toils. 165

O friend approv'd! O ever prudent guide!
(Thus to the prophets the virgin cry'd)
Whose knowledge many a famous chief foretold,
My unborn sons, when years on years have roll'd:
Vouchsafe to speak of some illustrious dame 170
(If such my line may boast) whose future fame
Among the virtuous and the fair may rise:
She ceas'd—the matron mildly thus replies.

Great dames from thee descend, of whom shall spring
The potent emperor and sceptred king; 175
All these, in sweeping vest, have equal praise
With crested knights that bright in armour blaze:
For wisdom, piety, and courage crown'd
With fame, but most for chastity renown'd.
Hard task to name, where many stand so high, 180
Not one I see to pass in silence by.

O! had'st thou in the cave thy thoughts display'd,
Thine eyes had then each passing form survey'd.

Then to the listening maid the dame reveal'd
Names yet in Time's remotest womb conceal'd: 185

At length arriving where Atlantes made

His near abode, her course Meliffia stay'd;

Once more she warn'd the dame, and urg'd once more

Her pressing counsel, urg'd so oft before,

And bade adieu—the martial maid alone 190

Pursu'd a narrow track her guide had shown.

Not far she rode, when, lo! before her sight

Appear'd the likeness of her much-lov'd knight,

Her dear Rogero, clos'd in fight between

Two mighty giants, who with dreadful mien 195

Wield their huge weapons, while he pants for breath,

And seems just sinking in the jaws of death.

Soon as the virgin sees, so forely prest,

One in whose form Rogero stands confest,

Her faith is vanish'd, new suspicion wakes, 200

And every late resolve her breast forsakes.

Is that Rogero (to herself she cries)

Still at my heart—and sure before my eyes?

And shall I (every certain sense deny'd)

Too blindly in another's faith confide? 205

Unseen my sympathizing heart can tell,
If near or absent he I love so well.

While thus she thinks, she hears or seems to hear
Rogero's well-known voice assail her ear;
She sees him fly, and each gigantic foe 210
As swift pursue: nor was the virgin slow
To mark their course, but urges all her speed,
And through the magic gate impels her steed;
There heedless enters, where Atlantes wile
Involves so many in one common guile, 215

Meantime was Paris close besieg'd around
By king Troyano's son in arms renown'd:
And had not Heaven fulfill'd the Christian prayer,
And pour'd a deluge through the darken'd air,
That day had sunk before the Pagan lance, 220
The sacred empire, and the fame of France,
The great CREATOR turn'd his eyes, and heard
The just complaint by aged Charles preferr'd,
And sudden, where all human help was vain,
The fire extinguish'd with tempestuous rain. 225
The wise will ever to th' Almighty bend,
Whose aid can best the falling state defend,
The pious monarch own'd, in grateful thought,
The hand divine whose power his safety wrought.

At

At night Orlando, on his restless bed, 230
 Revolves distressful fancies in his head;
 While here and there his thoughts each other chace,
 And never long maintain their flitting place.
 So from a water clear, the trembling light
 Of Phœbus, or the silver queen of night, 235
 Along the spacious rooms with splendor plays,
 Now high, now low, and shifts a thousand ways.
 Angelica returns, his careful theme,
 His waking object, and his nightly dream:
 He feels with double force the pains increase, 240
 That seem'd awhile by day compos'd to peace.

My life's best joy! how have I err'd! (he said)
 Why have I thus so fair a nymph betray'd?
 When on thy charms each day to feed my sight,
 On thy dear converse dwell with fond delight, 245
 Thy goodness yielded—then—O! fatal hour!
 I tamely gave thee into Namus' power.
 Far dearer than the blood that bathes my heart;
 How ill have I perform'd a lover's part!
 Ah! whither now, without my aid, alone, 250
 Whither, so young and beauteous, art thou gone?
 As when the sun withdraws his evening rays,
 A lamb, forsaken, midst the forest Grays

With tender bleats, in hopes the shepherd's ear
At length may chance the plaintive notes to hear; 255
Till from afar the wolf the sound receives,
And for his loss the hapless shepherd grieves.

Now lost in sleep the whole creation lay,
And cheer'd their spirits from the toils of day.
Some sunk in down; and some the herbage press'd; 260
While some on rocks, on oaks, or myrtles rest.
Yet thou, Orlando, seek'st in vain to close
Thy wakeful lids, estrang'd from sweet repose;
Or if a moment seals thy weary eyes,
In thy short slumber painful visions rise. 265

Orlando dreamt, that on a river's side,
With odorous flowers and shrubs diversify'd,
He gaz'd transported on that heavenly face,
Which Love himself had ting'd with rosy grace;
On those bright stars, whose glances food supply 270
To souls that in his nets entangled lie;
On that dear virgin, whose all-conquering eyes
Could in his breast his amorous heart surprise.

While thus he seem'd possess'd of every joy
That can a happy lover's thoughts employ, 275
A sudden storm the chearful day o'ercast,
The tender flowerets wither'd in the blast;

The

The forest shook, as when, in wintry skies,
South, east, and west with mingled fury rise.
Now while he shelter sought, the mournful knight 280
Seem'd in the gloom to lose the damsel's fight.
But while a thousand fears his soul dismay'd,
He heard her well-known voice imploring aid;
When to his ears this dreadful warning came,
"Ne'er hope on earth again to see the dame!" 285

The lover, waking, found the vision fled,
And saw his falling tears bedew the bed.
Unmindful now that dreams are empty shade,
By fancy form'd, he deem'd his dearest maid
With danger prest, and from his couch he flew, 290
And o'er his limbs his plated armour drew;
Then Brigiadaro took without delay,
But not a squire attendant on his way.
He wore not those known arms, and ample shield
With red and white distinguish'd in the field; 295
But arms of sable hue, whose darkness shows
A just resemblance to his inward woes.

Now midst the silence of the midnight hour,
He left his sovereign Charles; the Christian power
He left; nor bade adieu to Brandimart, 300
Once his lov'd friend and partner of his heart.

But

But when with golden tresses round her head,
 The morn arose from rich 'Tithonus' bed,
 And from earth's face the humid curtains drew,
 Orlando's flight, incens'd, the monarch knew: 305
 With deep concern his nephew's loss he heard,
 When honour call'd him now, where danger rear'd
 Her dreadful front, to guard from hostile hands
 His king, his country, and his social bands.

But noble Brandimart, whose faith well try'd, 310
 No chance could shake, whom nothing could divide
 From his lov'd friend; who inly hop'd once more
 Orlando to his fellows to restore;
 Swift from the host with zeal impatient goes,
 Nor would to Flordelis his thoughts disclose, 315
 Lest her fond love should his design oppose. }
 His wedded dame was she, his soul's delight,
 Scarce was he ever absent from her sight:
 The charms of beauty in her person shin'd,
 And every prudent grace adorn'd her mind. 320
 A tedious month his consort stay'd in vain,
 In hopes to see her Brandimart again;
 Till fear and love her breast so strongly rend,
 She quits the walls without a guide or friend.
 Orlando to the portal's nightly guard, 325
 In a low voice his mighty name declar'd:

Soon

Soon at the word, he let the draw-bridge down,
When swift the champion issu'd from the town:
He saw the troops of Africa and Spain
Encamp'd unnumber'd o'er the spacious plain: 330
Deep sunk in sleep was every weary band,
These stretch'd on earth, those leaning on the hand,
Then might the earl have slain a numerous
Nor yet his Durindana once he drew.
Too noble was Orlando's soul, to show 335
Inglorious hatred on a slumbering foe.

What time November strips the flowery field,
And bids the earth her verdant covering yield
To hoary frost; when trees dishonour'd stand,
And birds in clusters seek a foreign land; 340
His friends he left; nor yet his labours ceas'd
With wintry skies; nor spring his cares releas'd.
While thus the knight his eager search pursu'd,
He came one day to where a stream he view'd
That slowly to the seas was wont to glide, 345
And Brittany from Normandy divide.
But now the waters, swell'd with heavy rains
And melted snows, had delug'd all the plains;
And loudly foaming, with resistless force,
Bore down the bridge before them in their course. 350
Orlando,

Orlando, pausing here, awhile explor'd
Each neighbouring part to cross th' opposing ford :
As thus he linger'd, 'midst the flood appear'd
A slender bark, whose helm a damsel steer'd :
The Paladin besought her from the land 355
To give him passage to the further strand.

This bark (she answer'd) ne'er receives a knight
Unless he first his sacred promise plight,
At my request, the noblest war to wage,
That ever can a champion's arms engage. 360
If here, sir knight, you seek the further shore,
Swear with Hibernia's king to join your power
The fatal isle Ebuda to confound,
The most inhuman which the seas surround.
Know that afar, 'midst many a neighbouring isle, 365
Ebuda lies beyond the Irish soil ;
That, by an ancient law, to foreign lands
Sends many vessels fill'd with warlike bands,
To seize and bear unhappy dames away,
Doom'd for a dreadful monster's living prey : 370
There, on the strand, each day a female dies ;
Think then what numbers fall a sacrifice !

Scarce had she ended, when th' impatient knight
Vow'd to be foremost in so just a fight :

He

He fears lest thither by ill fate betray'd, 375

That island crew had seiz'd his lovely maid.

Then, ere the sun descended to the deep,

He reach'd St. Malo, where a friendly ship

Receiv'd the chief—they catch'd the driving blast,

And in the night Saint Michael's mountain pass'd; 380

Then steer directly tow'rd the chalky shore,

Whence England once the name of Albion bore.

But soon the southern breeze begins to fail,

And adverse winds from west and north prevail:

The sails are furl'd to shun the furious force, 385

That drives the vessel from its destin'd course.

Four days in vain they plough the foamy sea,

In one they measure back their former way;

At length the wind, that o'er the stormy main

Four days had driv'n them, chang'd its course again; 390

And let the shatter'd bark securely ride

Where Antwerp's river seeks the briny tide.

Soon as the crew, reliev'd from care and toil,

Had safely anchor'd on the friendly soil,

Lo! from the right, before them, came in view 395

An ancient fire, with locks of silver hue;

Who, first to each his courteous greeting paid,

Bespoke Orlando whom he deem'd their head;

And,

And, in his mistress' name, besought the knight
To glad her sorrows with his welcome sight; 400
Who not alone the prize of beauty held,
But all her kind in virtuous gifts excell'd;
For never warrior yet, by tempests tost,
Or led by land to that unhappy coast,
Refus'd to hear the dame her tale relate, 405
And give her counsel in her woeful state.

The gallant chief, whose pitying aid to gain
Misfortune never su'd, and su'd in vain,
Consents to quit the vessel, and pursue
The sage's steps, till near a pile they drew 410
Of stately frame, but fill'd with mournful gloom,
Where funeral black was hung in every room.
Orlando here beheld a damsel fair,
Whose looks and gesture spoke her deep despair:
With gentle welcome she receiv'd the knight, 415
Then thus began her sorrows to recite.

Know first, my lord, the hapless wretch you view
From Holland's earl her birth disastrous drew:
Two brothers did with me the blessing prove,
Which children find in fond paternal love. 420
While thus domestic peace each hour endear'd,
The duke of Zealand at our court appear'd;

Who went a war against the Moors to wage,
In flower of beauty and in blooming age:
His person pleas'd, but more his passion gain'd,
And soon my easy heart in fetters chain'd.
While adverse winds forbade his purpos'd way,
Our mutual love beguil'd his lingering stay;
And oft we vows exchange'd to join our hands,
At his return, in solemn nuptial bands. 430

Scarce from our country was Bireno gone,
(The name by which my faithful love was known)
When Friza's king, who long with artful mind,
To wed me to his only son design'd,
Arbantes nam'd, dispatch'd a courtly train 435
My hand in marriage of my fire to gain:
But I, who ne'er could change my constant love,
Or so ungrateful to Bireno prove,
T' evade this evil, tears and prayers employ'd:
My loving fire the union sought deny'd: 440
Dismiss'd from court th' ambassadors return'd;
With vengeful rage the king of Friza burn'd:
Our lands he enter'd, and with carnage fill'd,
In which, alas! my kindred all were kill'd.
Besides his mighty strength in arms beheld, 445
That few his vigour, in our age, excell'd;

He

He weapons us'd, to former times unknown,
And, in the present, us'd by him alone.
An iron tube he bore, whose womb enclos'd
A ball and nitrous grain, with art dispos'd: 450
When to a vent, scarce obvious to the sight,
Behind the barrel he directs a light,
With lightning flashes and with thunder's sound,
The bullet flies and spreads destruction round.

With this device our bands he twice o'erthrew 455
In open field, and both my brethren flew.
The elder first was doom'd the stroke to feel,
His heart transpierc'd through plates of jointed steel:
In vain the second strove from fate to fly;
He, like his brother, was condemn'd to die. 460
Sent from afar, the ball its force impress'd
Full at his back and issu'd at his breast.
One only castle to my fire remain'd,
Each other part the cruel king had gain'd.
This while he sought to guard with fruitless care, 465
He fell the last sad victim of the war.

The traitor mark'd him as he walk'd the round,
And pierc'd his forehead with a mortal wound.

My fire and brethren slaughter'd, I remain'd
The hapless heiress of my father's land. 470

When

When Friza's king propos'd the war to cease,
And grant to me and mine a lasting peace,
Would I consent to what I late deny'd,
And yield to be his son Arbantes' bride.
But this I still refus'd—my steadfast mind 475
Detested justly him and all his kind.
By him my sire and brethren's death I mourn'd,
My country wasted, and my cities burn'd.
To shake my stern resolves my people try,
And every art of prayers and threats employ: 480
When all their prayers and threats they found in vain,
But saw me still my purpose firm maintain,
The terms with him agreed, themselves to save,
Me and the fort into his hands they gave.

The king receiv'd me mildly, and assur'd 485
My life and lands alike should rest secur'd,
Would I my stubborn purpose yet forsake,
And, for my spouse, his son Arbantes take.
Then finding, when I every thought had weigh'd,
Dissembling could alone my purpose aid; 490
To ask forgiveness for the past I feign'd,
And gave consent to take Arbantes' hand.

Two brethren in my father's court were bred
Of loyal heart and of inventive head:

My thoughts to these disclos'd, they vow'd to join 495

Their mutual aid to second my design.

One, to secure my flight, a ship retain'd;

One, near my person, at the court remain'd.

While strangers now and natives all were led

T' attend the nuptial rites, a rumour spread 500

That, in Biscaia rais'd, a naval power

My lover brought t' invade the Holland shore:

For when in luckless fight our army fail'd,

In which I first a brother's death bewail'd,

With speed I sent to let Bireno know 505

The fatal inroad of our barbarous foe.

Meanwhile the ruthless king his course pursu'd,

Till every part his conquering arms subdu'd.

Bireno now, who heard not all was lost,

Had loos'd his vessels from Biscaia's coast: 510

These tidings to the king of Frizak known;

He left th' approaching nuptials to his son;

And sailing with his fleet; engag'd the duke,

His ships destroy'd, and him a prisoner took.

Now had the youth my hand receiv'd, and led 515

At night impatient to the nuptial bed.

Soon as my faithful friend, who stood beside

Conceal'd, the bridegroom drawing near espied,

Behind

Behind him with an axe so fierce he struck,
That life and speech at once the wretch forsook: 520
As sinks the slaughter'd ox besmear'd with gore,
So fell Arbantes, born in luckless hour!
Spite of Cymosco, doom'd his death to find,
So call the king, the basest of mankind;
By whom my fire and brethren found their fate, 525
Who now, t' ensure possession of my state,
Espous'd me to his son—some future day
To take perhaps my wretched life away.

My choicest treasures then secur'd, I flew
The hated place, and with my guide withdrew, 530
Whose trusty care my hasty steps convey'd
To where his brother with the vessel stay'd.
We court the winds, our oars divide the main,
Till Heaven decrees us safe this land to gain.
'Twere hard to tell which bore a greater part 535
Or grief, or rage, in fell Cymosco's heart;
Grief for his hapless son depriv'd of breath,
Or rage against the author of his death.
He, with his joyful fleet, the land regain'd,
Elate with conquest, and Bireno chain'd. 540
He came prepar'd a nuptial feast to share,
And view'd his triumph chang'd to black despair.

Nor day, nor night, he found a moment's rest,
Revenge and sorrow rankling in his breast:
The tyrant doubtless had Bireno slain, 545
The greatest woe he knew I could sustain;
But, while he spar'd his life, he surely thought
He held a net by which I might be caught.
Before the youth he sets these terms severe:
His fate he respites for a single year, 550
But death denounces then, with lingering pain,
Unless he first, by fraud or force, attain,
By any means, my person to secure,
And sacrificing mine, his life ensure.
Six castles have I since in Flanders fold, 555
And part employ'd in secret sums of gold
To bribe his guards; and part employ'd t' excite
German and English powers to do me right.
And now the fatal time is nearly clos'd;
The period to Bireno's life propos'd. 560
When force or gold will come too late to save
My plighted comfort from th' untimely grave.
For him my all is lost!—and nought remains
But now to yield these hands to cruel chains—
Yet, ah! could this redeem the youth I love, 565
My bosom dares the stern condition prove.

But

But when th' usurper has my person gain'd,
 When I have all his vengeful wrath sustain'd,
 I fear he ne'er will set Bireno free,
 To owe his freedom and his life to me. 570
 For this to you my fortune I unfold,
 And thus with many a warrior counsel hold,
 In hopes that some their succour may engage,
 That when I'm yielded to the tyrant's rage,
 He may not still in bonds my love detain, 575
 Or, when I'm dead, command him to be slain.
 But to this hour I ne'er have found a knight
 Who durst the sacred faith of knighthood plight,
 To guard me from the tyrant's vengeful power,
 Should he refuse Bireno to restore: 580
 So much his fatal arms their courage quell'd,
 Whose force no temper'd cuirass e'er repell'd.
 Now, if your valour not unlike is seen
 To your fierce semblance and Herculean mien;
 Vouchsafe with me to seek the Holland strand, 585
 And there resign me to Cymosco's hand:
 So may I firmly on your aid rely,
 That, though I fall, my lover shall not die.
 The damsel here her mournful story clos'd,
 While oft her sighs and tears were interpos'd. 590

Orlando then no time in speech affords,
 As one by nature little us'd to words;
 But instant vows, by generous pity fir'd,
 To grant that aid her hapless state requir'd:
 Nor means she shall, to save Bireno, go 595
 A willing prisoner to her cruel foe;
 But thinks them both in safety to restore,
 If still his sword retain its wonted power.

Now tow'rd's the port they bend their eager way,
 The prosperous winds their vessel swift convey: 600
 The third auspicious morn the coast they gain'd;
 The champion landed, but the dame remain'd;
 Orlando will'd her, ere she trod the shore,
 To hear her foe Cymosco was no more.
 Himself descends the deck with ready speed, 605
 And sheath'd in armour, mounts a dappled steed,
 In Flanders nourish'd, and of Danish race,
 More strong and bold than active in the chace:
 For when to cross the stream the bark he took,
 In Brittany his courser * he forsook. 610

Orlando now the guarded fortress view'd,
 Where ready arm'd the hostile squadron stood
 T' oppose invading force: for fame declar'd,
 A kinsman to th' imprison'd lord prepar'd,

* BRIGLIADORO.

From

From Zealand, with a fleet and numerous host, 615

To make a bold incursion on the coast.

Orlando, fearless, one of these requir'd

To tell the king, a wandering knight desir'd

With sword or pointed spear to prove his might,

And wage, on terms like these, the doubtful fight: 620

The king, if he the challenger o'erthrew,

Should have the lady that Arbantes slew:

But on the other part the king should swear,

That if himself were vanquish'd in the war,

He would Bireno from his chains release, 625

And give the youth to leave the realm in peace.

The soldier swift the bold defiance bore:

But he, who ne'er was train'd to virtuous lore,

Whose churlish soul no courteous deeds could bind,

To fraudulent arts apply'd his treacherous mind, 630

In hopes, if first his arms the knight detain,

The hated damsel in his power to gain.

Now from the gate he sends a chosen force,

That wheeling round the plain with silent course,

Cut off the foe's retreat; while vainly there 635

Orlando waits to wage an equal war.

The king deludes him still with fraudulent lies,

Till he the foot and cavalry espies

Rang'd at the destin'd place; and then in view
 Himself with others from the portal drew: 640
 Thus all his guile to seize alive the knight,
 With care providing to prevent his flight,
 Cymosco proves; and thinks the deed to find
 So certain, that he leaves his tube behind:
 Nor would he now those thundering arms employ, 645
 When here he meant t' imprison, not destroy.

The knight of Anglance now has couch'd his spear,
 Where closely press'd the men and arms appear:
 First one, and then another, helpless dies;
 Through six at once the lance impetuous flies, 650
 And in the seventh inflicts so deep a wound,
 That prone he tumbles lifeless to the ground.
 His fatal sword unsheath'd, the streaming blood
 Stains their gay armour with a crimson flood.
 Cymosco wishes soon his tube and fire, 655
 Where present dangers most their aid require;
 He bids them straight be brought, but bids in vain;
 Who once a shelter in the walls can gain,
 Returns no more: when thus their fears he view'd,
 The king, with equal fear, their steps pursu'd: 660
 Swift through the gate he bent his eager flight,
 And bade the bridge be rais'd t' oppose the knight.

But, close behind, the knight with equal haste
Has gain'd the bridge and thro' the portal past.
Orlando little heeds th' ignoble crowd, 665

His vengeance only on the traitor vow'd;
But far beyond the king impels his speed,
Blest in th' excelling swiftness of his steed,
Yet soon with other arms returns to fight,
And lies in secret ambush for the knight. 670

The huntsman thus with dogs and sylvan war
Expects the boar descending from afar,
Whose rage upturns the soil, the trees destroys,
While all the wood rebellows to the noise.

Soon as the king the warrior near espies, 675
He fires the tube and swift the bullet flies:
At once the lightning flashes, shakes the ground,
The trembling bulwarks echo to the sound.
The pest, that never spends in vain its force,
But shatters all that dares oppose its course, 680

Whizzing impetuous flies along the wind,
Yet miss'd the fatal mark the wretch design'd:
Beneath the knight the ball resistless flew,
And, through the belly pierc'd, the courser flew.
Both horse and horseman fell with clashing sound; 685
One press'd, the other scarcely touch'd the ground:

As

As once Antæus, on the Lybian strand,
 More fierce recover'd when he reach'd the sand:
 So seem'd to rise again with added might,
 Soon as he felt the earth, the Christian knight. 690
 Whoe'er has seen the winged lightning fly,
 By Jove in thunder brandish'd from the sky,
 And penetrate some secret cavern stor'd
 With nitrous powder and a sulphurous hoard;
 At once inflam'd, with vast explosion driven, 695
 The ruin seems to mingle earth and heaven;
 The bursting fires the walls and buildings rend,
 And to the stars the shatter'd stones ascend:
 Resistless thus th' indignant chief appear'd,
 When from the plain his mighty limbs he rear'd; 700
 And with such rage to instant vengeance flew,
 That Mars had trembled at the dreadful view.
 The Frizeland monarch, struck with pale affright,
 Wheel'd round his horse to urge his eager flight:
 With eager speed his feet Orlando plies; 705
 Less swift an arrow from the bowstring flies;
 And where before his heavier courser fail'd,
 (Wondrous to see!) his lighter feet prevail'd.
 Full soon th' impatient knight o'ertook the foe,
 Then at his helmet aim'd a deadly blow: 710

Deep in his head the sword a passage found,
And sent the body lifeless to the ground.

Within the bulwarks now was heard afar
A different clamour and alarm of war:
Bireno's kinsman, who had gain'd the coast, 715
And found the guards deserted from their post,
The portal enter'd with his eager band,
And scour'd the city round on every hand:
While none attempt his purpose to molest,
Such dread Orlando on their minds impress'd. 720

Nor less the Holland troops confess their fear,
Unconscious whence or why these foes appear:
But when they noted, by their speech and dress,
These came from Zealand's isle, they su'd for peace;
And proffer'd to the chief their willing aid 725
'Gainst those who had their lord in prison laid.

This people ever to the Frizeland power,
And to their king, a settled hatred bore;
Urg'd by his avarice, cruelty, and pride,
By whom their lov'd, their hapless sovereign died. 730

Orlando, friend to either, interpos'd;
And soon in lasting peace the parties clos'd;
The prison gates they from their hinges broke,
And threw to earth: Bireno now forsook

His

His dreary cell; and gave, for life restor'd, 735

His grateful praises to Anglante's lord.

Then, with a numerous train, he sought the strand

Where fair Olympia in the ship remain'd:

So was the virgin nam'd, whose rightful sway

The Holland realms should by descent obey, 740

The people honour her with duteous zeal;

What fond endearments pass'd, were long to tell;

How oft with joy the tender pair caress'd;

Or to the valiant earl their thanks express'd.

Her subjects then, their vow'd allegiance paid, 745

To her paternal seat restor'd the maid;

While she consign'd to lov'd Bireno's hand

Herself, her people, and recover'd land.

He, other thoughts revolving in his mind,

The earldom to his cousin's care resign'd; 750

To Zealand thence he purpos'd to remove

With her, the dearest object of his love;

To tempt his fortune next on Friza's shore,

For which in hand a precious pledge he bore;

A daughter to the king deceas'd, whom there 755

A captive found, he took beneath his care,

And to his brother meant to wed the blooming fair. }

The day Bireno left his dreary cell,

Orlando bade the joyful train farewell:

But

But nothing would the champion bear away 760

From all the spoils of that victorious day,

Save that device, whose unresisted force

Resembled thunder in its rapid course:

Resolv'd the murdering engine to remove,

Where man might never more its fury prove. 765

Soon as he saw the ship forsake the coast,

When to the sight the lessening land was lost;

When nought appear'd but waves on every side;

He held the murderous tube, and thus he cry'd.

That ne'er again a knight by thee may dare, 770

Or dastard cowards, by thy help in war,

With base advantage meet a nobler foe,

Here lie for ever in th' abyss below.

O curst device! base implement of death!

Fram'd in the black Tartarean realms beneath; 775

By Beelzebub's malicious art design'd

Against the hapless race of human-kind;

Hence, to thy native seat—He said, and gave

The ponderous engine to the greedy wave.

END OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

But nothing would the champion bear away
 From all the spoils of that victorious day;
 Save that device, whose untried force
 Rejoiced thunder in its rapid course;
 Retolved the maddening engine to remove,
 Where man might never more its fury prove.
 Soon as he saw the ship forsake the coast,

Went to the light the lessening land was lost;
 When nought appear'd but waves on every side;
 He held the murderous tube, and thus he cry'd:
 That ne'er again a knight by thee may die.

O! shall cowards by thy help be won?
 'Tis but advantage meet a nobler foe
 Shall he for ever in thy arms below.

O craft device! O baleful implement of death!
 'Tis thou in the black Turban's name
 By Machiavelli's treachery art designed
 Against the hapless race of human kind;
 Hence to thy native seat—Hence, and give
 The poisonous engine to the greedy wave.

END OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

THE A R C A D I A

THE

FIFTH BOOK

OF

ORLANDO.

THE ARGUMENT.

CONTINUATION of the story of Olympia. Orlando, in pursuit of Angelica, arrives at the island of Ebuda, where he kills the monster and delivers a lady. The story of Olympia concluded. Orlando departs to continue the search of Angelica, and is decoyed to the enchanted castle of Atlantes. Arrival of Angelica, who by the virtue of her ring delivers Orlando, Sacripant, and Ferrau, from the power of the magician. Battle between Orlando and Ferrau. Angelica leaves the combatants, and Sacripant pursues her. Orlando defeats two bands of Pagans, and finds Isabella in a cave of outlaws.



THE
FIFTH BOOK

OF
ORLANDO.

BIRENO, midst the female captives gain'd,
Cymosco's daughter in his power detain'd.

Scarce fifteen summers had the virgin seen,

Sweet were her looks, her gesture and her mien.

So infant roses from the bud display

5

Their opening beauties to the genial ray.

When first he view'd the pious sorrows stain

Her lovely cheeks to weep a father slain,

What sudden warmth possess'd his beating heart!

Not half so swift the flames their rage impart,

10

Where hostile force, or envious hands conspire

To give the ripen'd corn to wasting fire.

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M

But

But if perchance, by sudden impulse sway'd,
Unguarded he cares'd the Frizeland maid,
None censur'd what they saw, while each inclin'd 15
T' ascribe it to a good and pious mind:

Our praise to every generous deed we owe,
That raises those whom fortune whirls below;
That sooths the anguish of a heart distress'd;
Much more an orphan with her woes oppress'd. 20

O! gracious Heaven! how oft do clouds abuse
Weak mortals' eyes, and bound their partial views!
Bireno's foul and impious deeds appear
The pious tokens of a soul sincere.

Now seize the ready mariners their oars, 25
And, launching in the waves, forsake the shores.
At length o'ertaken by a devious blast,
Three days uncertain o'er the billows cast,
The third they saw, as near the evening drew,
A wild and desert island rise to view. 30

Soon as the vessel to a creek they bore,
Bireno with Olympia went on shore:
Beneath a tent the slaves their cates prepar'd;
The unsuspecting dame the banquet shar'd,
Then to the couch, for gentle slumber drest, 35
Contented, with her lord retir'd to rest;

While

While to their bark the weary crew retreat,
And, sunk in sleep, their former toils forget.

In sweet oblivion lost, Olympia lay,
Tir'd with the labours of the watery way: 40
In her calm breast no irksome fears arose;
Such fears as once had banish'd her repose.
Herself she view'd in safety on the shore,
'Midst the deep silence of the midnight hour,
Her husband at her side: but slumber fled 45
His eyes, whose waking thoughts deep treason bred.
Soon as he sees her wrapt in sleep, he takes
With speed his vesture, and the bed forsakes:
Silent he wakes his mates, and gives command
To launch into the deep and quit the land. 50

Unblest Olympia on the shore remain'd,
Whom long the pleasing bands of sleep restrain'd,
Till from her golden wheels Aurora threw,
On verdant meads, the drops of sparkling dew;
And, on the margin of the wavy flood, 55
Alcyone her ancient complaints renew'd.
When now, nor scarce asleep, nor yet awake,
She thought Bireno in her arms to take:
At length, dispell'd by fear, her slumber fled;
She looks, and looking sees th' abandon'd bed. 60

Her griefs increasing, as her fears augment,
She quits the couch and issues from the tent;
The favouring moon her trembling beam supplies,
Yet nought but sea and desert land she spies:
She calls Bireno's name; the caves around 65
With pity to Bireno's name resound.

A rock beside the ocean's limits stood,
That, worn by surges, belly'd o'er the flood:
Thence from afar she saw the parting sails
Of false Bireno drive before the gales: 70
Trembling she falls: a chilly sweat invades
Her alter'd visage, and her colour fades.
But, when recover'd, with her fruitless cries
She calls the vessel, while the vessel flies;
And where her lips refuse their accents weak, 75
Her clasping hands and frantic gestures speak.

O whither fly'st thou? treacherous and unkind!
Thy bark has left her dearest freight behind—
Return—return—and since thou bear'st away
My better part, O take this lifeless clay! 80

While thus she spoke, her garments in her hand
She wav'd, to lure the vessel back to land.
But the same winds that through the billows bear
His swelling sails, disperse her plaints in air.

Thrice,

Thrice, cruel to herself, she thought to throw 85
Her wretched body in the seas below.

At length she ceas'd to view the shores in vain,
And fought, with feeble steps, the tent again.

Her face reclining on the conscious bed,
She pour'd a shower of plenteous tears, and said. 90

Last night in thee, alas! two lovers lay;
Why did not two together rise to-day?

Forsworn Bireno!—fatal was the birth,
That gave accurst Olympia to the earth!

Where shall I turn?—all hopeless of relief, 95
Not one to hear my plaints, or soothe my grief?

No bark t' escape—while hunger seals my doom,
Without the shelter of a friendly tomb;

Or savage wolves, that howl in every cave,
Shall in their wombs afford a dreadful grave! 100

But ah! what death so dire can these bestow,
As thou, ungrateful author of my wo!

What if some pilot, wandering o'er the deep,
Should take me hence in safety to his ship;

Shall I to Holland fly, where thy command 105
Defends the harbour, and forbids to land?

Or shall I seek again my natal shore,
When thou, by fraud, hast made it mine no more?

How ready did thy troops their post maintain,
 To take possession of their new-found reign! 110
 Shall I to Flanders turn? for thee the rest
 I sold, the little that I there possess'd:
 All was employ'd, ingrate! to set thee free—
 What clime will now receive unhappy me?
 Shall I the realm of Friza seek to gain, 115
 Where once for thee I scorn'd a queen to reign,
 And hence my brethren and my fire were slain?
 And claims a love like mine no more regard,
 Is this, unjust Bireno, my reward?

While thus she spoke, her frantic hands she spread
 And tore the golden tresses from her head; 121
 Again she fought the beach in wild despair,
 Loose to the breezes flow'd her scatter'd hair,
 There seated on a rock, in doleful mood,
 She seem'd a statue hanging o'er the flood, 125

Meantime Orlando to the seas consign'd
 Cymosco's pest, in pity to mankind;
 But little this avail'd—th' infernal foe
 Who fram'd such engine in the shades below,
 In future hapless times, to second birth 130
 Th' invention drew to plague the sons of earth,
 O! wretched soldier! now your armour bright
 Forsake, and only gird your sword in fight;

But this dread weapon on your shoulder bear,
Or never hope the victor's wreaths to share. 135

Against Orlando now the wind prevails;
Now on the poop it blows in gentle gales;
And now by turns a sudden calm succeeds;
That little on her course the vessel speeds.
For Heaven's high will forbade the crew to land 140
Before th' Hibernian king had reach'd the strand,
To forward that event, which since befel,
And which, in order due, the muse shall tell.

Now near the coast the prow the billows broke,
When thus Orlando to his pilot spoke: 145
Haste! launch the boat, and here the ship detain,
While to yon rock I hasten through the main:
The largest cable to my hand consign;
The largest anchor to the cable join;
And mark my purpose, when in dangerous fight, 150
I dare with yonder monster prove my might.

This said; with anchor and with cable stow'd,
The boat they launch'd amid the dashing flood:
Then all his arms, except his sword, he leaves,
And tow'rds the rock, alone, the billows cleaves: 155
Close to his breast he draws the sturdy oars,
And turns his back upon the destin'd shores.

Aurora now had rais'd her radiant head,
And to the sun her golden tresses spread;
Half seen above the waves, and half conceal'd, 160
To old Tithonus' jealous eyes reveal'd;
When to the barren rock approach'd so nigh,
As from the vigorous hand a stone might fly;
He heard, and yet he scarcely seem'd to hear,
A tender, plaintive voice assault his ear: 165
Sudden he view'd against the rock's steep-side
A lovely dame in cruel fetters ty'd:
Naked she stands above the briny wave,
While her fair feet intruding waters lave.
He sees, but vainly strives from far to trace 170
The downcast features of her bashful face;
Then plies for nearer view his eager oar—
When, hark! the seas, the woods, the caverns roar!
The billows swell; and, from the depths below,
In open view appears his monstrous foe. 175
As from the humid vale black clouds ascend,
When gathering storms their pregnant wombs distend:
So through the liquid brine the monster press'd
With furious course; beneath his hideous breast
Vex'd ocean groans—Orlando, void of fear, 180
Nor chang'd his colour, nor his wonted cheer:

Firm

Firm in himself, to guard the dame dismay'd,
And her dire foe with powerful arm invade,
Between the land and orc his course he ply'd,
But kept undrawn the falchion at his side. 185

Soon as the monster, that to shore pursu'd
His deathful way, the boat and champion view'd,
He op'd his greedy throat that might enume
A horse and horseman in its living tomb.

Near and more near Orlando dauntless rows, 190
Then in his mouth the ponderous anchor throws,
Whose width forbids the horrid jaws to close. }

So miners, while they urge their darkling toil,
With heedful props support the crumbling soil.

His teeth secur'd, Orlando with a bound 195

Leap'd in the yawning gulph; and whirling round

His trenchant blade, the dark retreat explor'd,

And with repeated wounds the monster gor'd.

Mad with the pain, he rises o'er the tides,

And shows his jointed back and scaly sides; 200

Then downward plunging in the bottom laves,

And throws the troubled sands above the waves.

The Paladin, who felt the rushing streams,

Forfook the orc, and oar'd with nervous limbs

The billowy brine, while in his hand he bore 205

The anchor's cable till he reach'd the shore :

There

There firmly fix'd, upon the rock he stood,
And strain'd each nerve, while struggling through the
flood

The monster follow'd, by that arm compell'd
Whose strength the strength of mortal man excell'd.
As when a bull at unawares has found 211
With straiten'd cords his horns encompass'd round,
Furious he leaps, he bounds from side to side,
The haulfers all his fruitless pains deride:
So far'd the orc, while from his mouth he shed 215
A tide, that dyes the ocean still with red:
Lash'd by his tail with many a sounding blow,
The parting sea reveals th' abyfs below:
Now dash'd aloft the briny waves are thrown,
Pollute the day, and blot the golden sun. 220
The neighbouring forests, and the mountains hoar,
The winding rocks rebellow to the roar.
Rous'd at the tumult, from his pearly bed,
Old Proteus o'er the waters rais'd his head:
Soon as his eyes beheld so strange a fight 225
Between the monster and the Christian knight,
He left his flock and urg'd his fearful flight,
Ev'n Neptune on his car (such terror spread)
With dolphins rein'd to Æthiopia fled.

Ino,

Ino, whose breast her Melicerta bears; 230
The sea-green sisters, with dishevell'd hairs;
Glaucus and Triton; all the watery train,
In diverse parts, fly scatter'd o'er the main.
Anglantes' warrior * now, the conflict o'er,
Had drawn the dreadful monster to the shore; 235
Which scarce he reach'd, when spent with toil, and spread
Along the sand, his shapeless bulk lay dead.

Soon swarming o'er the coast the island crew
Came hastening down the wondrous sight to view;
And loudly cry'd, that mighty Proteus' rage 240
Would once again his savage herds engage
To waste the land, unless with humble prayer
They mov'd the God, themselves and race to spare;
And, as an offering for his monster slain,
They whelm'd th' offending champion in the main. 245
As spreads from torch to torch th' increasing light,
Till all the region with the blaze is bright:
So through the madding vulgar swiftly ran
The fierce contagion, caught from man to man.
One whirl'd a sling, a bow another took; 250
This drew a sword, and that a javelin shook.
The generous Paladin surpris'd beheld
Th' ungrateful throng with hostile thoughts impell'd:

* ORLANDO.

But

But as a bear, for public pastime bred,
In Ruffia or in Lithuania led, 255
Contemns the yelping cur; with like disdain
Orlando near beholds the dastard train,
Against him leagu'd, with stupid anger wield
Their idle weapons to dispute the field.
Soon Durindana from the sheath he drew, 260
And 'midst his foes with noble fury flew,
Who hop'd with ease t' oppress a single knight,
Nor fenc'd with shield, nor cas'd in armour bright.
At ten fierce strokes, beneath his conquering hand
Full thirty fell, and soon he clear'd the strand. 265
While thus th' unequal strife the knight maintain'd,
Hibernia's troops the fatal island gain'd,
And disembark'd where none t' oppose they view'd;
A dreadful slaughter through the land ensu'd:
Their goods were pillag'd by the Irish train, 270
The houses set on fire, the people slain:
The walls were raz'd, and scarce remain'd behind
A man alive of this devoted kind.
Orlando hastens now the dame to free,
Prepar'd for death beside the roaring sea: 275
Near and more near he draws, and thinks he spies
Features but late familiar to his eyes.

Lo!

Lo! imag'd to his thought Olympia's face,
She, most unhappy of the female race;
She, whom forsaken on the desert strand, 280
By false Bireno late the pirate band
Convey'd their victim to Ebuda's land. }

Full well the damsel knew th' approaching knight,
But from his look she turn'd her bashful sight;
Confus'd and mute she hung her drooping head, 285
While burning blushes on her cheeks were spread.

The warrior then enquir'd what envious power
Had led her step to that inhuman shore,
From where he left her crown'd with joy and peace,
Partaking with her comfort every bliss. 290
Alas! I know not (she began to say)
If for my life I grateful thanks should pay,
Or rather mourn the day again must close,
And not behold a period to my woes.

She said; and sobbing deep her sorrows spoke, 295
How her false lord his faith and honour broke.

While this she told, she turn'd, and blushing show'd
A form like Dian, pictur'd in the flood
With naked beauties, when incens'd she threw
On rash Actæon's brows the sprinkling dew. 300

Orlando pacing on the shelly strand,
Awaits his ship to anchor near the land;

That

That thence with vestures he may clothe the dame.
While this his thought employ'd, Oberto came,
Hibernia's king, who heard the monster slain 305
There lay extended by the dashing main;
That, swimming through the seas, a knight unknown
Had in his jaws a ponderous anchor thrown,
And drawn him to the beach, as barks, secur'd
With twisted cables, on the ground are moor'd. 310

Soon as th' Hibernian king Orlando view'd,
Tho' drench'd with water and deform'd with blood,
Him well he knew, with him in Gallia bred,
At Charles' high court his infant years were led,
Which late he left to seek his native land, 315
(His father dead) the sceptre to command.

His helmet rais'd, he ran with eager pace
To hold Orlando in a strict embrace;
Nor less Orlando felt, the king to view,
And round his neck his friendly arms he threw. 320

Orlando to Oberto then display'd
The cruel sufferings of the fair betray'd;
What proofs Bireno of her love could boast;
For him her kindred slain, her country lost;
For him prepar'd her dearest life to yield: 325
All this he knew, and part himself beheld.

While

While thus he speaks, the gushing sorrows rise,
And trickle from the fair one's weeping eyes:
Like vernal skies her lovely visage show'd,
When gentle showers descending from a cloud, 330
Frequent and soft, the sun with chearing gleams
Darts thro' the watery veil his trembling beams:
As then in foliage wet with glistening dew,
Sweet Philomel her plaintive note renews;
So Cupid in her grief reviv'd appears, 335
And bathes his plumage in her pearly tears.
His golden shaft he kindles in the flame,
That from her piercing eyes like lightning came,
And tempers in the crystal stream that flows
Between the lily fair and blushing rose. 340
His arrow now prepar'd, the bow he bends,
And at th' unguarded king his weapon sends;
For whose defence nor plated arms avail,
Nor trebled shield, nor twisted coat of mail:
While rapt in gaze he stands, he feels the dart, 345
With sudden force, infix'd within his heart.

Oberto, fir'd with love, no more suppress'd
The passion struggling in his amorous breast.
He bade th' afflicted fair no longer mourn,
But hope her sorrow soon to joy might turn; 350
With

With vows t' attend her steps to Holland's shore,
And there replace her in the sovereign power;
Nor cease till on her treacherous spouse he gain'd
A just revenge for all her wrongs sustain'd.

And now he sends fair female robes to find; 355
Nor long they sought for robes of various kind,
Since every day the vestment there was stor'd
Of some lost damsel by the orc devour'd.
From these the king Olympia's limbs attir'd,
But could not clothe her as his soul desir'd: 360
For should the choicest silks from far be brought,
With every cost of art and genius wrought;
Should ev'n Minerva all her skill unfold,
And Lemnos' god supply the purest gold;
Yet to th' enamour'd prince 'twould scarce appear 365
A covering worthy for the dame to wear.

Next morn the king, the dame, and friendly crew,
Embarking, from the cruel port withdrew:
With these Orlando to Hibernia went,
And thence to France his speedy voyage meant. 370
Scarce on the island he remain'd a day;
Not all their friendly prayers could bribe his stay:
Cupid, the wandering lover's constant guide,
No longer there permits him to reside;

But

But ere he parted, to Oberto's care 375

He gave in charge to avenge the injur'd fair.

The king, already by her quarrel fir'd,

In zeal exceeded what the earl requir'd :

A league with England and with Scotland made,

He rais'd a force the traitor to invade ; 380

Drove him, an outcast, from the Belgic shore,

And next in Friza ruin'd all his power.

He rous'd his native Zealand to rebel,

Nor ceas'd, till in the war Bireno fell :

He fell ; yet scarce his wretched life could prove 385

A forfeit equal to his breach of love.

Olympia soon Oberto's bride is seen,

A countess late, and now a powerful queen.

Again Orlando ploughs the briny tides,

Again in port secure his vessel rides : 390

He leaps on shore, and Brigliadoro takes ;

All arm'd he mounts, and wind and sea forsakes.

Ere winter's months in due succession roll'd,

Full many an action worthy to be told

The knight achiev'd ; but blame not here the bard,

If worth conceal'd should pass without regard : 396

Far readier was the Paladin to court

From deeds true glory, than those deeds report ;

And never yet, without some witness near,
His great exploits had reach'd the general ear. 400

On hill, on plain, on champaign, field, and shore,
A tedious tract of land he journies o'er :

When entering now a forest's gloomy shade,
Distressful cries his startled ears invade :

He spurr'd his steed, and soon before him spy'd. 405

A knight upon a big-limb'd courser ride,

Who bore by force across his saddle-bow

A female form, with every mark of wo :

She struggled in his arms, she wept, she pray'd,

And call'd Anglante's valiant prince * to aid. 410

Now on the dame Orlando bent his view,

And well the features of her face he knew :

At least it seem'd Angelica the fair,

Whom long he fought with unavailing care.

When he, in semblance of a maid distress'd, 415

Beheld her image that his soul possess'd,

He call'd aloud, and thundering on his steed,

Let loose the reins to Brigliadoro's speed.

The felon nought reply'd, nor deign'd to stay,

But all intent upon his lovely prey, 420

Through the thick forest held so swift a pace,

The wind had lagg'd behind him in the race.

Thus

* O R L A N D O.

Thus flying, one pursuing, one pursu'd,
While shrill complainings echo'd thro' the wood,
They reach'd a mead, and view'd a building rais'd
With costly art, where gold and silver blaz'd: 426
Here pass'd the stranger through the lofty door,
Who in his arms the seeming virgin bore,
And soon the entrance Brigliadoro gain'd,
That fierce Orlando on his back sustain'd. 430
With fury fir'd, alighting from his steed,
He rushes through the dome with eager speed:
Of silk and gold he sees each stately bed,
Rich figur'd hangings on the walls are spread,
And for the floor the feet on tap'stry tread. 435
Above, below, unwearied seeks the knight,
Yet finds not what alone can glad his sight,
Nor sees Angelica, nor him espies
Who snatch'd her beauties from his longing eyes.

Here various champions, kept in thralldom, dwell,
Ferrau, Gradasso, own the potent spell: 441
This Sacripant and Brandimart detains,
Roger here with Bradamant remains;
The gentle pair, whom magic's powerful wile
Allur'd so late to this enchanted pile, 445
When both their lover's seeming danger view'd,
And both the visionary foe pursu'd.

Here this discourteous host his guests abus'd,
 By each of daring wrongs or thefts accus'd;
 One for his courser stol'n indignant burn'd, 450
 Another for his ravish'd mistress mourn'd.

Friend met with friend—but here they met in vain,
 Since like deception binds the fated train,
 Not one (so strange th' illusion of the place)

While here detain'd could in his mind retrace 455
 The least remembrance of another's face.

Here night and day the ponderous mail they wore,
 And constant on their arm the buckler bore:

In stalls at hand their harness'd couriers stood,
 By plenteous racks surcharg'd with generous food.

This new device (the like unseen before) 461

By old Atlantes of Carena's lore

Was fram'd, to keep Rogero safe from war,

Till past the influence of his evil star.

Among the rest that to this castle came, 465

Chance thither led Albracca's beauteous * dame,

Who, scap'd from death on dire Ebuda's strand,

Now hop'd once more to view her native land,

Fair India's realms—and gladly would she take

King Sacripant, or brave Orlando make 470

* ANGELICA.

Guide of her way; though neither knight she priz'd,
But both their amorous suits alike despis'd.
Yet bending eastward her adventurous course,
By towns and castles girt with hostile force,
Some guard she wish'd, that danger could defy;
And well their valour might her want supply: 476
Them long in cities, towns, and woods she sought,
Till chance at length the wandering virgin brought,
Where Sacripant and where Orlando bound
By fated spells, where join'd with these she found 480
Gradasso stern, Rogero, and Ferrau;
And many more in abject state she saw.

The gate she fearless pass'd, to none reveal'd,
Even from Atlantes by her ring conceal'd.
Orlando here and Sacripant she view'd, 485
Who through the dome their fruitless search pursu'd.
She knew Atlantes, by her likeness feign'd,
Orlando and king Sacripant detain'd
With covert wiles; of these she long resolv'd
The doubtful choice, and scarce at length resolv'd.
Full well she knew Orlando's dauntless might 491
Could best defend her in the day of fight;
Yet knew not how hereafter to displace
The lover thus exalted in her grace;

But let her raise Circassia to the skies, 495
Again submissive at her foot he lies,
Should she command; and hence each reason weigh'd
Inclin'd to him the long debating maid;
Then sudden from her mouth the ring she took,
And, lo! the mist king Sacripant forsook: 500
But while she meant from Sacripant to draw
The obscuring veil, Orlando and Ferrau
She near him view'd, who both had long explor'd
The magic roof for her their souls ador'd.

Around the princess throng'd th' impatient three,
No more deny'd their lov'd-one's charms to see. 506
No longer could Atlantes' baffled power
Detain the champions captive in his tower;
Who, lightly leaping on their steeds, withdrew,
In haste the rosy damsel to pursue, 510
The black-ey'd virgin, bright with golden hair,
Who swift to flight impell'd her gentle mare:
When these so far were led, she fear'd no more
Th' enchanter's arts could work their baleful power;
The ring, in danger ever prov'd her shield, 515
The fair between her ruby lips conceal'd;
That done, she vanish'd from their longing sight,
And mute with wonder left each gazing knight.

The

The wayward fair now other thoughts pursu'd,
And both the chiefs alike disdainful view'd, 520
Resolv'd to neither's arm that aid to owe,
Which, in their stead, her ring might well bestow.
Meantime the lovers, who deluded stood
On either side amid the gloomy wood,
Alternate gaz'd: like hounds that lose the trace, 525
Of hare or fox, which long they held in chase.
Herself invisible, the scornful maid
With secret smiles their baffled plight survey'd.
One only path amid the forest led,
That seem'd to point the way by which she fled, 530
Orlando and Ferrau with eager speed
The search pursu'd, and Sacripant his steed
As swiftly spurr'd, while left behind, the dame
Her bridle check'd, and softly pacing came.

But, branching now in tangled brakes, was lost 535
The winding way, that through the woodland crost:
Ferrau, of kings the proudest 'midst the proud,
Thus, turning tow'ards the two, exclaim'd aloud:
Say—Whither would ye go?—your course restrain—
Unless you breathless mean to press the plain. 540
Think not in love a rival will I view,
Or let another her I love pursue.

Then to Circassia's king Orlando spoke :
Who dares our wrath unpunish'd thus provoke,
Must deem us, sure, a vile and abject pair, 545
More fit the distaff than the lance to bear.

Thou wretch ! (indignant, to Ferrau he said)
But that I view no helm defends thy head,
This arm should teach thee to repent the wrong,
And curse th' ungovern'd license of thy tongue. 550

To whom the Pagan—Lo ! I stand prepar'd,
Nor think my head defenceless I regard :

Though here without a helm, I trust full well
This hand your force united can repel.

Then thus Orlando Sacripant address'd : 555

Lend him awhile your helm at my request,
Till with this weapon I chastise in fight

The unequall'd folly of yon boasting knight.

Great were my weakness then (the monarch cry'd) ;

But if thou seek'st to have his wants supply'd, 560

Thy own bestow—nor deem me less prepar'd

Than thee, to give a fool his just reward.

Ferrau rejoin'd—Insensate both ! for know,

Did I a helmet seek to meet the foe,

Yourself had prov'd my prowess to your cost, 565

And each had now his casque in combat lost.

Bare-

Bare-headed thus, and bound by solemn vows,
Learn, never covering must surround my brows
But what Orlando wears—that glorious prize
I seek to gain—With smiles the earl replies: 570
Wilt thou, secure, with head defenceless, dare
Assail the Paladin in equal war,
To win from him such honour as he won
In Aspramont from Agolantes' son?

To whom the Spanish boaster thus reply'd: 575
Full oft this arm Orlando's force has try'd;
When I at pleasure, not his helm alone,
But all his armour might have made my own;
Then little priz'd—though now I seek to gain
The temper'd helm, and trust shall soon obtain. 580
His patience lost, enrag'd Orlando cries:
Thou infidel! artificer of lies!
When was the time, and where the fatal coast
That saw thy arms o'er mine the conquest boast?
Behold that champion (little thought so near) 585
Behold in me the Paladin is here!
Nor seek I any vantage.—Thus he said,
And swift the casque unlacing from his head,
He hung it on a tree in open view,
And Durindana from the scabbard drew. 590

No

No less Ferrau was seen his sword to wield,
While o'er his head he rais'd the fencing shield:
They rein their steeds, they strike, they ward by turns;
Their fury kindles as the combat burns.
Where best their force can plate or joint invade, 595
They speed the thrust, or whirl the beamy blade.
Not all the world a fearless knight can show
Like each of these to meet a fearless foe.
For courage both, for prowess both renown'd,
And both alike incapable of wound: 600
Thus less for need to avoid impending harms
Than pomp of show, they went array'd in arms.

There flood Angelica, conceal'd from sight,
The single witness of so fierce a fight.
For Sacripant, who deem'd the royal maid 605
Not far remote amid the forest stray'd,
Soon as Orlando and Ferrau he view'd
Engag'd in strife, her fancy'd course pursu'd.

Angelica awhile in equal scales
The conflict sees, where neither side prevails: 610
Then in a sportive mood the casque she took,
And soon unseen the combatants forsook.
Ferrau first turning to Orlando said,
Lo! how our late companion has betray'd

The

The faith of knights ! What prize for us remains, 615
When he, by fraud, the victor's meed obtains ?
Then on the tree Orlando bent his view ;
The helm he mis'd, and fierce his anger grew ;
And like Ferrau he deem'd that this, in scorn
Of either's claim, Circassia thence had borne. 620
The earl his Brigliadoro through the wood
Impatient urg'd ; as swift Ferrau pursu'd ;
Till different tracks of horses' feet they found,
Left by the knight and damsel on the ground.
Here to the left his course Orlando bore, 625
The course Circassia's king had held before :
Ferrau, by chance, more near the mountain stray'd,
Through late worn traces of the flying maid.

Meantime the virgin to a fountain drew,
Where verdant bowers, with leaves o'er shading, grew ;
Where pilgrims, shelter'd from the sultry beam, 631
With draughts refreshing from the limpid stream
Allay'd their thirst : here, fearless of surprise,
Angelica (who on her ring relies
In every danger) to the bank descends, 635
And on a bough the glittering helm suspends ;
Then seeks a place where, ty'd at ease, her beast
Might crop from flowery meads the verdant feast.

Ferrau,

Ferrau, who close pursu'd the flying dame,
By various windings to the fountain came, 640
Not unobserv'd, for instant from his sight
She vanish'd, and prepar'd for speedy flight;
But vainly strove the helmet to regain,
That roll'd to distance bounded on the plain.
When first the Pagan prince with raptur'd eyes 645
Beholds Angelica—he hastes, he flies
To meet the fair-one, who his hope deceives,
As some light form the awaken'd dreamer leaves.
He seeks her round in covert, shade, and bower,
But seeks in vain—blaspheming every power, 650
With Trevigant and Mahomet, ador'd
By Pagan votaries, as Gods implor'd,
And every name his sect repeats with awe,
The priests and teachers of his impious law.

Now near the fount again the warrior drew, 655
And, cast on earth, Orlando's helmet knew,
By characters that round its edge explain'd
When, and from whom, the precious prize was gain'd:
His vow complete, he seiz'd with eager haste,
And on his head the long-wish'd helmet plac'd; 660
Then, having fought in vain the damsel lost,
Return'd, delponding, to the Spanish host.

Now,

Now, faithful muse, the noble deeds record,
 The fruitless search of Brava's generous lord *.
 Another helm his head-piece lost supply'd, 665
 But nor the temper, nor the steel he try'd.
 He sought alone from every prying sight
 To hide the features of Anglante's knight.

As Phœbus from the fields of Ocean drew
 His smooth-hair'd coursers wet with briny dew; 670
 What time the moon her ruddy beams display'd,
 And stars yet glimmer'd through the lingering shade;
 Not far remote from Paris' regal town,
 Orlando gain'd new laurels of renown.
 Two bands he met; one Manilardo led, 675
 A Pagan reverenc'd for his hoary head,
 Of Norway king; once gallant in the field,
 But better now in arts of council skill'd.
 To lead the second, with his standard came
 The king of Tremizen, of mighty fame 680
 In Afric, and Alzirdo was his name,

When now, unchain'd from winter's icy cold,
 Within their beds the murmuring currents roll'd;
 When the glad meads resum'd their vivid green,
 And budding leaves to deck the trees were seen; 685

* ORLANDO.

Then

Then gave king Agramant his wide command,
To muster all his forces, band by band:
For this the king of Tremizen in haste,
And king of Norway, o'er the country pass'd,
To lead their squadrons, where the army drew 690
To pass before their chiefs in just review.

When now Alzirdo view'd the earl from far,
Whose limbs and mien proclaim'd the god of war,
He deem'd him first of every martial band,
And rashly long'd to meet him hand to hand. 695
Young was Alzirdo, and of lofty pride,
Of daring courage, and of vigour try'd.
His social ranks, in evil hour, he left,
And spurr'd his steed, of better sense bereft,
The valiant foe's prevailing force to feel, 700
And sink transpierc'd by great Orlando's steel.
The courser flies affrighted o'er the plains,
No master on his back to guide the reins.
Now rose a dreadful tumult, when they view'd
The youth all pale and weltering in his blood: 705
Some couch'd their spears, and some their falchions
drew,
And on the knight with headlong fury flew:
While some with darts and arrows gall'd from far
The flower of champions in a missive war.

A thousand

A thousand darts, and spears, and swords rebound 710
From his broad shield, or on his cuirass found.

But he, who ne'er a thought of fear allow'd,
With careless eye beheld th' ignoble crowd.

Thus, leaping o'er the fence in nightly folds,
A wolf the number of the sheep beholds. 715

No quilted vest, nor fencing turban, roll'd
Around the head in many a winding fold,

Nor plated shield, nor temper'd casque defends,
Where Durindana's trenchant edge descends.

Loud groans and cries the dying soldiers yield, 720
And heads and arms are scatter'd o'er the field.

Death stalks amidst the crimson ranks of fight,
In various forms, all horrible to sight;

Yon weapon in Orlando's hand (he cries)
With my fell scythe in copious slaughter vies! 725

Regardless of the way, with fearful speed
This plies his feet, that spurs his rapid steed.

Lo! Virtue bears her mirror in the field,
Which every blemish of the soul reveal'd:

None look'd therein, except a hoary fire; 730
Age shrunk his nerves, but could not damp his fire.

He saw 'twas nobler far in fight to die,
Than with dishonour turn his back to fly.

This

This sage was Norway's king, who grasp'd his lance,
And fearless met the matchless peer of France. 735
Against the shield's round boss the weapon broke;
Unmov'd the Paladin receiv'd the stroke.

As Manilardo pass'd, Orlando aim'd
His deadly falchion that like lightning flam'd;
But Fortune favour'd here the king so well, 740
The blade fell flat, yet with such fury fell,
The reverend warrior senseless lay for dead,
And swooning darkness o'er his eye-balls spread.

As birds affrighted wing their airy way,
When the fierce hawk pursues his trembling prey;
So far'd these bands before the Christian knight, 746
Some maim'd, some slain, and some dispers'd in flight.

Orlando now, tho' well the land he knew,
Uncertain where his mistress to pursue;
Through plains and forests sought the beauteous dame,
Till near a mountain's craggy steep he came; 751
Thence, from a cleft, a stream of yellow light
Pierc'd the dun shadows of surrounding night.

With beating heart, the chief exploring found
A spacious cavern hewn within the ground, 755
The mouth with brambles fenc'd; a safe retreat
For those that fix'd in woods their rustic seat

From

From human haunts !—the taper's ray reveal'd
 With glimmering light the cave by day conceal'd.
 Orlando first his Brigiadaro tied; 760
 And clear'd the branches that access deny'd;
 Then in the tomb, that held the living, went;
 By many steps; a narrow deep descent.
 Large was the cave, but scarce at noon of day
 The winding mouth receiv'd a feeble ray; 765
 Yet from an opening to the right appear'd
 A beam of sunshine that the dwelling cheer'd.
 Here, seated near a blazing hearth, he found,
 A tender maid with blooming beauty crown'd;
 Though in her eyes the starting tear confess'd 770
 Some hidden anguish rankling in her breast.
 With her an aged beldame seem'd to jar
 (As women oft are wont) in wordy war;
 But when Orlando in their presence came,
 Each held her peace: the knight to either dame 775
 Fair greeting gave, as one whose noble mind
 Was ever gentle to the gentle kind.
 With wonder fill'd, the champion sought to know
 What savage wretch, to human race a foe,
 Could keep entomb'd in this sequester'd place 780
 The sweet attractions of such virgin grace:

When to the knight, with many a heavy sigh,
She made, in pleasing accents, this reply.

Though, courteous knight, my mournful tale disclos'd,

To certain punishment I stand expos'd, 785

Since yonder woman will my words relate

To him, who holds me in this captive state ;

Yet let it come—what can I from his hand

More grateful than the stroke of death demand ?

Hear first, that Isabella's name I own, 790

Daughter of him who fills Galicia's throne :

Once was I his—but now, alas ! the heir

Of desolation, sorrow, and despair !

From love I trace the cause of all my smart,

From love that steals the virgin's gentle heart. 795

Once was I young and beauteous, rich and blest,

Now poor and low, with fortune's frowns deprest.

Twelve months are past, since in Bayona's land

My royal sire a tournament ordain'd,

To which, invited by the trump of fame, 800

From various regions various champions came.

But, whether love misled my partial mind,

Or that his deeds eclips'd the warrior kind,

My soul's fond praise Zerbino singly won,

To Scotland's king the dear, the only son : 805

I lov'd

I lov'd—yet happy seem'd to place my heart
Upon an object of such high desert.

Not less sincere than mine his passion glow'd;
And though forbid to meet, our flames we vow'd
By message oft, and while we liv'd disjoin'd, 810
We felt the tenderest union of the mind.

Zerbino now, when clos'd the solemn feast,
To Scotland's realm again his course address'd.
If e'er your soul the hour of parting knew,
Reflect what sorrow must his loss ensue. 815

Our different faiths forbade him to require
My hand in marriage of the king my fire.
A Pagan I, and he a Christian bred,
With open rites he ne'er must hope to wed
Galicia's princess; hence his fearless mind 820
To bear me from my native land design'd.

Oft in a garden, deck'd with summer's pride,
Where near the gay parterres a crystal tide
Meandering roll'd, upon the banks I stood,
And view'd afar the hills and surgy flood. 825
This place t' effect his bold design he chose,
That nothing might our union more oppose:
To me his secret thoughts he first declar'd,
Then, well equipp'd, a rapid bark prepar'd,

By Odorico the Biscayan's care, 830
On sea and land a master of the war.
Zerbino, by his aged father sent,
With all his powers in aid of Gallia went :
Himself forbid to stay, he left behind
This Odorico, for the charge assign'd, 835
On whom he deem'd his friendship might rely,
If benefits conferr'd could fix the tie.

Now, in my garden, on th' appointed day,
Till night I stay'd, a voluntary prey :
When Odorico near the city drew, 840
And up the river with his chosen few
Advancing silent, sudden leapt on shore,
And me in triumph to his galley bore.
Joyful I bade my native soil adieu,
In hopes my lov'd Zerbino soon to view. 845
Scarce had our ship the cape of Mongia past,
When, rising from the left, a furious blast
Drove clouds on clouds, made mountain-furges rise,
And dash their spumy foreheads in the skies :
We find, while vainly with the storm we strive, 850
Our ship against the rocks of Rochelle drive:
Swift as a shaft before the wind it drove,
And none could save, but HE who rules above.

Struck

Struck with our peril, the Biscayan try'd
A last resource, too oft in vain apply'd: 855

With him he bade me from the ship descend,
And to the shallow skiff our lives commend.
Two more descended; and a numerous band
As soon had follow'd, but with sword in hand
Compell'd, alas! their entrance we deny'd, 860

Our cable cut, and floated on the tide,
Till safe we landed on the rocky coast;
But with the vessel wreck'd the crew were lost.
Though with the sinking ship remain'd behind
My vests and jewels, wealth of every kind, 865
Yet blest with hopes to find my prince again,
Unmov'd I saw them swallow'd by the main.

Wild was the land, uncultivate and rude,
Nor track of feet, nor roofs of men we view'd;
Nought but a mountain, round whose craggy brow
The loud winds blew, the billows roar'd below. 871

Here cruel Love, that false perfidious boy,
Prompt to deceive, and watchful to destroy,
With suit dishonest, by his froward will,
My joy to sorrow chang'd, my good to ill. 875
That friend, in whom his trust Zerbino plac'd,
Froze in his faith, and burnt with flames unchaste.

The traitor now a secret plan resolv'd,
 To accomplish what his impious soul resolv'd :
 And hence, of two that 'scap'd with us the flood, 880
 Would one dismiss, a youth of Scottish blood,
 Almonio nam'd, and by Zerbino lov'd,
 In faith unfully'd, as in arms approv'd :
 Him Odorico bade to weigh the shame,
 Should they to Rochelle's walls a princely dame 885
 On foot convey ; and begg'd him hence with speed
 From Rochelle to supply our present need.

Almonio, fearing nought, his course pursu'd,
 To where, conceal'd from view beyond the wood, }
 Six miles remote, the peopled city stood. 890 }
 One friend remain'd : to him the traitor meant
 Without disguise t' unveil his foul intent :
 Corebo of Bilboa was his name ;
 Whom Odorico, nothing aw'd by shame,
 Would tempt to break his faith ; with him he led 895
 His early life ; with him from childhood bred.
 Corebo, great of soul, and nobly born,
 Abhorr'd the deed, and with indignant scorn
 Reproach'd his breach of faith, and firmly strove
 By every means t' oppose his impious love. 900
 From threat to threat increasing passion grew
 In either breast, till each his weapon drew :

When,

When, struck with terror to behold the fight,
I turn'd me to the woods in speedy flight.

Soon Odorico, long to battle train'd, 905
By skill superior such advantage gain'd,
He left Corebo on the ground for dead,
And follow'd me who thence so swiftly fled.

When prayers, and threats, and flatteries nought avail'd,
With open force my honour he assail'd. 910

In vain I wept—implor'd—in vain I press'd

The sacred friendship to his lord profess'd;

Bade him reflect that to his faith sincere

Zerbino trusted all he held most dear.

Entreaties lost, and every hope of aid 915

Far, far remote, to save a wretched maid;

I know not if by fortune thither led,

Or by my voice that round the country spread

Its piercing notes; or wont to scour the strand

When vessels bulg'd, and strew'd with wrecks the sand;

But from the summit of the hill I spy'd 921

A crew descending to the ocean's side:

The impure Biscayan, seiz'd with guilty fright,

His purpose left, to save himself by flight.

Behold me by this band in happy hour 925

Preserv'd, my lord, from that false traitor's power;

Eight months elaps'd, I see the ninth arrive,
Since here I wretched dwell entomb'd alive.

All hopes of my Zerbino now must fail—

From these I learn, my beauty set to sale, 930

And terms agreed, a merchant will receive,

And me, unhappy, to the Soldan give.

So spoke the lovely maid, and as she spoke,

Sighs following sighs her angel speeches broke.

Thus they; when sudden in the cave appears 935

A crew with knotty clubs, with staves and spears:

The ill-favour'd leader of the brutal crew

His single eye around the cavern threw;

A stroke, that chanc'd upon his face to light,

Had lopt his nose and clos'd one eye in night. 940

Soon as he saw the chief, who listening fate

To hear the virgin-fair her tale relate,

He turn'd, and joyful to his fellows said:

Behold a bird for whom no net was spread!

Then to the earl—For me in luckier hour 945

No stranger ever reach'd this place before:

Thou may'st have heard I long have sought in vain

Such radiant arms and vest like thine to gain;

And gladly I behold thee thus at hand,

To answer now what'er my wants demand. 950

Swift

Swift starting from his seat with noble pride,
Orlando smil'd severe, and thus reply'd.

These arms I value at a price so high,
Who hopes their purchase must full dearly buy.

Then from the blazing hearth a brand he took, 955
All red with fire and hissing from the smoke,
And sudden threw—above the caitiff's nose,
By chance it strikes between the meeting brows;
And instant quenches in eternal night
His only wretched minister of light; 960
And sends his ghost to join the dreary train
By Charon doom'd to lakes of fiery pain.

A table, form'd in square, of ponderous wood,
Of size capacious, in the cavern stood;
Which, ill sustain'd with rude unshapen feet, 965
The thief and all his fellows held at meat:

Wondrous to tell! this weight Orlando threw,
Where throng'd together press'd th' ungodly crew.
The shatter'd limb, crush'd head, and gory breast,
The crackling bone the thundering mass confess'd.

So when in clustering knot a snaky brood, 971
Reviving joyful with the spring renew'd,
Bask in the sun, if by some peasant thrown
Amidst them lights a huge unwieldy stone,

On

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On all the curling heap what mischief flies ! 975
This leaves his sever'd tail ; that mangled dies :
Another crush'd and bruis'd attempts with pain
To drag behind his sinuous length of train.
Seven only 'scap'd, and these Orlando drew
Where a thick tree with spreading branches grew ; 980
The leaves he clears, and hangs them quivering there
A living prey to all the fowls of air.

That aged beldame, to the thieves a friend,
Who saw their ill-spent lives' disastrous end,
With shrieks and outcries, tearing from her head 985
The hoary hairs, to woods and deserts fled.
Sad Isabella now Orlando pray'd
With guardian power to watch a helpless maid ;
And vow'd her steps should all his steps attend :
The noble warrior, like a tender friend, 990
Her sorrows sooth'd ; and when Aurora, drest
In rosy garland and in purple vest,
Resum'd her wonted track through morning air,
The knight departs with Isabella fair.

END OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

THE
SIXTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.

THE ARGUMENT.

REVIEW of the Pagan forces. Mandricardo, king of Tartary, hears of the defeat of the two bands by Orlando, and goes in search of that knight. He meets with Doralis, daughter to the king of Granada, and carries her off by force. Agramant prepares for a general assault of Paris: the behaviour of the emperor Charlemain on the occasion. GOD commands his angel, with the assistance of Silence, to conduct Rinaldo with his army to the walls, and sends Discord amongst the Pagans. The house of Sleep. The assault begun: gallant defence of the besieged: the exploits of Rodomont, who having leapt the walls, makes a dreadful slaughter. Rinaldo comes to the relief of the Christians: his speech to his army. General battle. Acts of Rinaldo, Zerbino and Ferrau. News brought to Charles of the devastation made by Rodomont in the city of Paris.



THE
SIXTH BOOK
OF

ORLANDO.

NOW Spain and Afric's monarchs, to provide
Such chiefs as best befit their troops to guide,
From where they long maintain'd their winter's post,
In order summon'd all the numerous host.

Before the rest the Catalans appear, 5
And Doriphcebus' waving banners rear ;
Then march (no more by Fulvirantes led,
Their gallant king by brave Rinaldo dead)
Those of Navarre ; the Spanish king's command
Commits them now to Isolero's hand. 10
Next Balugantes Leon's people leads :
Grandonio then Algarbi's troop precedes,
Marfilius' brother : Falsirones arm'd
The less Castile ; around his banner swarm'd

Those

Those that with Madaraffo Seville leave, 15
And peopled Malaga; from Gades' wave
To where green Cordova her pastures shows,
And Betis o'er his flowery border flows.
Then Stordilano and Tefira lead,
With Baricondo, numbers that succeed. 20
Galicians came, that, Maricaldo lost,
On Serpentino fix'd to guide their host;
Then those Avila and Zamora send:
Beneath one leader all their ranks extend.
The Saragozan troops, and household bands 25
Of king Marfilius' court Ferrau commands,
All strongly arm'd, and well in combat known:
Here Malgarino, Balinverno shone.
Here Malzarifes and Morgantes, led
By equal fate a foreign soil to tread; 30
Whom each, of kingdom and of wealth bereav'd,
Marfilius in his regal dome receiv'd.

These legions marshall'd, next in fair review
The chiefs of Agramant their forces drew.
Oran's huge king appear'd upon the plain, 35
A giant-leader o'er his vassal train.
The following squadron march'd with sorrow fill'd
For Martafin, whom Bradamant had kill'd;

And much they griev'd that ever woman's breath
Should vaunt the king of Garamanta's death. 40

Arganio rules the Libicanian train,
Who wept for fable Dudrinasso slain.

With eyes cast downward, and with cloudy hue,
Brunello brings his Tingitanian crew :

For since beneath the near o'ershading wood, 45
Where on the rock Atlantes' castle stood,

He lost to Bradamant the fatal ring,
He liv'd disgrac'd with Afric's potent king ;

And had not Isolero, who beheld
Brunello bound, to Agramant reveal'd 50

The truth at full, a gibbet had receiv'd
The wretched culprit, and of life bereav'd.

The king, to mercy by their prayers dispos'd,
Releas'd the fatal noose already clos'd.

O'er Nafamoni's Pulian's hand presides, 55
Amonia's train king Agricaltes guides.

No nobler banner through the camp was spread,
Than that which valiant sage Sobrino led ;

Through all the host could few with him compare,
In tents to counsel, or in fields to dare. 60

The troops by Gualciotto late display'd,
Now Rodomont's imperious rule obey'd :

Of

Of horse and foot he led united powers,
 New rais'd by Agramant, from Afric's shores.
 But three days since, he safely brought to land,
 From mountain billows, his afflicted band,
 What time the sun obscur'd his glorious light 65
 In dreadful tempests of furrounding night:

No bolder Saracen in all their host,
 No stronger warrior Afric's camp could boast; 70
 Nor 'midst their countless legions could they show
 To Christian faith a more inveterate foe.

Then Prusio, Alvarecchia's king, proceeds:

Zumara's sovereign, Dardanello, leads
 His forces next—sure luckless birds of night, 75
 Or crows, or ravens of ill-omen'd flight,

To these from mouldering roof or lonely bower
 Presag'd the chance of some disastrous hour;
 For Heaven decrees, to-morrow's fatal field
 Shall see each chief his life in battle yield. 80

The squadrons past, in numerous order train'd;
 Save Tremizen and Norway none remain'd;
 Of these no martial standards yet appear'd;
 Of these no tidings in the field were heard.
 When Agramant awhile in anxious thought 85
 Had weigh'd their absence, to his sight was brought

A squire;

A squire, who serving late (amidst his guard)
The king of Tremizen, the truth declar'd;
That Manilardo and Alzirdo quell'd,
With numbers slaughter'd press'd the sanguine field. 90
Scarce have I scap'd by headlong flight (he cry'd);
And had not Fortune turn'd his course aside,
The knight, O king! whose conquering arm alone
O'erthrew these troops, had all your camp o'erthrown.

Few days had past, since to the Turkish host 95
A champion came, in arms his country's boast;
Him Agramant with honours due caress'd,
The valiant heir of Tartary confest,
The son of Agrican, of story'd fame,
And Mandricardo his redoubted name. 100
His deeds had through the world diffus'd his praise:
But one eclips'd each deed of former days;
When at the Syrian fairy's drear abode,
The feat of magic, dauntless might he show'd,
Amidst a scene, whose wonders but to hear, 105
Would strike the boldest heart with chilling fear;
In which he won the cuirass, which of yore
In fields of battle Trojan Hector wore.

This chief the squire's unwelcome tidings heard,
And, fir'd with rage, his haughty visage rear'd; 110

He bade to ask the squire, what vestments o'er
His mailed arms the dreaded champion bore;
To this he answer'd—Black his mournful vest,
Black was his shield, and unadorn'd his crest.

To Mandricardo late a beauteous steed 115
The king Marfilius gave, of generous breed;
His colour bay, but black his feet and mane,
His dam of Friza, and his sire of Spain.
This Mandricardo, sheath'd in steel, bestrode,
And spurr'd impetuous o'er the field, and vow'd 120
To view the camp no more, till he beheld
The knight unknown in fable arms conceal'd.

That day and half the next, in eager thought,
Enquiring oft, the fable knight he fought:
When, lo! he view'd a meadow, crown'd with shade, 125
Where a deep stream with circling waters stray'd.
To guard the narrow pass, a numerous band
Of hardy warriors, clad in armour, stand.
The Pagan asks what chief had thither sent
So strong a force, and what the concourse meant? 130
To him their leader scorn'd not to reply,
Mov'd with his lordly speech; whose presence high,
And arms enrich'd with gold and gems, proclaim
Some mighty warrior, not unknown to fame.

Sent by our lord (he cry'd) we hither bring 135

The royal daughter of Granada's king;

Whom now, tho' scarce the tidings yet have spread,

He gives to bless the king of Sarza's * bed.

We to her fire encamp'd conduct the maid;

And now she lies repos'd in yonder shade. 140

Then Mandricardo—Doubtless she is fair,

Fain would I view the charge that claims your care;

Lead me to her, or here the dame convey,

For haste forbids me longer to delay.

What madness has thy better thoughts mislead?— 145

Granada's captain said—nor further said:

The Tartar plac'd his eager spear in rest,

Which furious rush'd against the speaker's breast:

Before the stroke the shatter'd cuirass flies,

And, stretch'd on earth, a lifeless corse he lies. 150

The son of Agrican his spear regain'd,

Nor other weapon in the field sustain'd:

No sword nor mace he held: that fated hour,

When, won by conquest, Hector's arms he bore,

The sword he miss'd, and vow'd that never blade 155

Should grace his side (nor vain the vow he made)

Save Durindana, by Almontes borne,

Orlando's now, and once by Hector worn.

* RODOMONT.

Great was the courage of the Tartar knight,
On such unequal terms to wage the fight. 160
This drew the sword, that plac'd the lance in rest,
And round him close the furious numbers press'd.
In heaps they fell—at length the javelin broke,
The broken truncheon in his grasp he took.
As Hebrew Sampson, wielding in his hand 165
The fatal jaw, o'erthrew the hostile band
Of stern Philistines—shields and helmets fly;
And oft at once the horse and horseman die.
As in the open fields, or sunny meads,
The brittle stubble and the spiky reeds 170
Resist but little, when the wary hind
Kindles the flame, to which the northern wind
Gives double force, till wide around it preys,
And all the furrows crackle in the blaze:
So these alike in vain defence engage 175
With haughty Mandricardo's, dreadful rage.
Soon as the passage freed the champion view'd,
Where late the centry to defend it stood,
Amid the new-worn path, with eager tread,
He press'd the turf, by sounds of sorrow led 180
And loud laments, to judge how truly Fame
Had rais'd the beauties of Granada's dame.

Where

Where the stream winding gave the Pagan way
He pass'd, while round him slaughter'd warriors lay;
Till 'midst the mead his matchless prize he found, 185
The gentle Doralis, with beauty crown'd;
So was she nam'd—beneath its ancient shade
An oak's rough trunk sustain'd the trembling maid.
Her tears, like springs that unexhausted flow,
Fell trickling down, and stain'd her breast of snow; 190
And on her features plain reveal'd appear'd,
She wept for others, for herself she fear'd.
Her fears redoubled, when the knight she view'd
With visage stern, and arms with blood bedew'd,
Blood of her friends: her wailings rent the sky; 195
Her sad attendants join'd the piercing cry;
Sage matrons, squires, and dames (a chosen band)
The best and fairest of Granada's land.

Soon as the Tartar prince that face beheld,
Whose charms the brightest charms of Spain excell'd,
That even in grief can spread the flame of Love; 201
(How must she then in joy each bosom move!)
He conquers but to yield: enrapt he stands
A willing prisoner in his captive's hands.
Then on a milk-white steed without delay 205
He seats the damsel, to pursue his way;

But first, in gentle words, he bids adieu
To dames, to squires, and all the weeping crew.
Henceforth in me will be her guard (he cries);
I shall, her squire, her lord, her mate, suffice 210
At every need—my friends, farewell!—They hear,
And helpless part with many a sigh and tear.
What grief, what anguish (to themselves they said)
Will pierce her father's soul! What thoughts invade
Her consort's breast! What vengeance shall assuage 215
His cruel pangs, and fate his dreadful rage!
O! were he here, to save from foul disgrace
Th' illustrious blood of Stordilano's race!
The Tartar, happy in his prize obtain'd,
A prize by fortune and by valour gain'd, 220
Now gently soothes his fair-one's grief and fears,
Whose cheeks and lovely eyes are wet with tears;
Vows for her sake, he left his realm and crown,
Whose rule extends to lands of far renown,
Not to contemplate France or Spain (he cries) 225
But the soft beauties of her beaming eyes.
If love unfeign'd may ever hope to prove
The virgin's smiles—I merit then your love:
If high descent—who nobler can aspire?
I boast the mighty Agriçan my sire: 230

If

If wealth or power—what name exceeds my own?

In empire I submit to God alone :

If valour—well my deeds to-day declare,

My valour pleads my title to the fair.

These words, and many more which love had taught,
In Doralis, with soft persuasion, wrought

A gentle change, till soon her listening ear

Consents with less constraint his suit to hear :

Nor on his face sometimes she shames to bend

Her languid eyes, where pity seems to blend

With young desire : The Pagan hence, whose heart

Had oft confess'd the painful, pleasing smart,

Drew certain omens that the beauteous dame

Would not for ever scorn his amorous flame.

Thus journeying on, in thought elate and gay,

With Doralis, companion of his way,

The hour advanc'd, when friendly night prepares

Its balmy rest to banish mortal cares :

Now half conceal'd the sinking sun he views,

And with redoubled haste his course pursues,

Till distant sounds of rustic pipes he hears,

And curling smoke from village roofs appears :

There harmless shepherds hold their humble seat,

No sumptuous dwelling, but a calm retreat.

The master of the herds with simple grace;
Welcom'd the knight and damsel to the place;
Who pleas'd his welcome heard: for not alone
In towns and courts are courteous manners known;
Full oft in wilds, beneath the lonely shed
Of Nature's sons, are social virtues bred.

In peaceful shade the knight and damsel lay;
And when with morn they took their early way,
Fair Doralis her grateful thanks express'd
To him, whose roof receiv'd her for his guest.

Now heard king Agramant that England's powers
Had past the narrow seas from Britain's shores:
Marfilius, Garbo's ancient king, and all
The Pagan leaders, at the herald's call
In council meet; and with one voice unite,
Against the walls to bend their strongest might:
Above the rest the king unwearied goes,
The first and second squadron to dispose:
Himself resolves with these th' assault to make,
And every toil and danger to partake.

Ere yet th' assault began, the Christian lord
In Paris' walls with holy rites implor'd
Th' offended powers, and rang'd in meet array
The priests and brethren, sable, white, and grey,

Sung

Sung fervent hymns; while those repentant bands,
By pure confession snatch'd from Stygian hands, 280
In blest communion join'd the dear repast,
As if th' ensuing morn were doom'd their last.

Th' Imperial chief, on pious acts intent,
By peers and senators surrounded, went,
By knights and princes, to the loftiest fane, 285
Himself th' example to his subject train;
There, with clasp'd hands, and eyes to Heaven ad-
drest,

He pray'd—O God! though sins pollute my breast,
Yet let not these for present vengeance call,
Lest, through my guilt, thy faithful people fall. 290

If 'tis decreed that thy Almighty hand
Must deal those sufferings which our crimes demand,
At least awhile thy righteous ire forego,
Nor let thine enemies inflict the blow.

Should these subdue us, while we boast the grace 295
Of Christian faith, esteem'd thy favour'd race,
The Heathen world that power may useless call
Which lets its votaries unaided fall:

So Babel's laws o'er all mankind shall spread,
And pure Religion hide her sacred head. 300

Preserve the chiefs that oft have stood prepar'd
Thy blameless pastors and thy Church to guard.

Too

Too well we feel, when we for mercy pray,
Against our faults how light our merits weigh:
But let thy grace our deep contrition wake, 305
Our souls will soon a second nature take:
Nor can we doubt thy saving help to find,
Thy help so oft bestow'd on lost mankind.

So spoke the prince devout, and meekly pour'd
His fervid vows to Heaven's eternal Lord. 310
The guardian Angel spreads his hallow'd wings,
And to his Saviour's ear the offering brings.
Unnumber'd vows that instant thus preferr'd
By those blest spirits, Heaven's Eternal heard:
At this the souls in endless bliss above, 315
With features blending pity, peace, and love,
All turn'd to HIM, the source of endless grace,
With one request to save the Christian race.

The Goodness Infinite, whose ear to gain
The upright heart has never pray'd in vain, 320
Cast round his pitying eye, and with his hand
Call'd faithful Michael from th' Angelic band;
Then thus he spoke—Go! seek the Christian power
With friendly vessels brought from England's shore;
Lead these to Paris from the distant coast, 325
Unheard, unnotic'd, by the Pagan host.

Find

Find Silence first—command him to prepare
 Whate'er befits with thee the task to share—
 Such is my will—then seek a different road,
 Where in her cavern Discord makes abode: 330

Bid her with speed her steel and fewel take,
 And in the Moorish camp new flames awake;
 Amongst the chiefs for mightiest prowess known,
 Let every seed of wild debate be sown;
 Let war intestine, mutual death succeed, 335
 Let some be captives, some in combat bleed,
 And some, in rage, self-exil'd from the host,
 Their sovereign leave to mourn his champions lost.

He said: The blessed Angel nought replies,
 But swift t' obey his heavenly Maker flies: 340
 Where'er his course the radiant envoy steers,
 The clouds disperse, the troubled ether clears;
 And round him plays a circling blaze of light,
 Such as when meteors stream through dusky night.

While still he ponders in his zealous mind 345
 Where best this enemy of speech to find;
 At length he deems that Silence sure may dwell
 With monks and abbots in the cloister'd cell,
 The church's hallow'd walls: where never ear
 Might other sound than chanted psalters hear: 350

To

To meet him there he certain hope assumes,
 And moves with speed increas'd his golden plumes,
 No Silence there he found, he view'd alone
 His name enroll'd, himself no longer known:
 Nor Peace, nor Charity was there to see, 355
 Nor Love, nor Faith, nor meek Humility;
 For these, Wrath, Av'rice, Gluttony, and Pride,
 Sloth, Cruelty, and Envy there reside.
 The Angel, wondering at a sight so new,
 Saw Discord soon amidst the brutal crew, 360
 Her, in whose search he meant, at Heaven's command,
 T' explore Avernus' ever mournful strand.
 He knew her by the vesture's hundred dyes,
 Of lists unnumber'd of unequal size;
 Which rent in shreds, but ill those limbs conceal'd 365
 By every step or breath of wind reveal'd.
 Her uncomb'd hairs seem'd constant strife to hold,
 Of various hues, black, silver, brown and gold.
 Some hung in ringlets, some in knots were ty'd;
 Her bosom some, and some her shoulders hide; 370
 Her hands and lap a countless medley bore
 Of writs, citations (an exhaustless store!)
 Oppression's various forms, that make the poor
 In cities never find their state secure

Before,

Before, behind, on either side her stand 375

Attornies, notaries,—a brawling band!

Her Michael call'd, and bade her instant go

To spread dissention midst the Pagan foe,

Then ask'd for Silence: Discord thus replies,

That Silence never yet has met my eyes: 380

Though oft his name from many have I heard,

Oft heard his praise for craft and guile prefer'd;

But Fraud, sometime the partner of his way,

Our comrade here, can best his haunts betray—

Lo! where she stands—She said, and pointing show'd

Where Fraud appear'd amidst the motley crowd. 386

Her garb was decent, lovely was her face,

Her eyes were bashful, sober was her pace;

With speech, whose charms might every heart assail,

Like his who gave the blest salute of—hail! 390

But all deform'd and brutal was the rest,

Which close she cover'd with her ample vest,

Beneath whose folds, prepar'd for bloody strife,

Her hand for ever grasp'd a poison'd knife.

Of her the Angel ask'd: and Fraud reply'd: 395

Silence was wont with Virtue to reside,

With Benedict and old Elias' train,

In convents where religion first began:

Much

Much time he chose in learned schools to pass,
 With Architas and wife Pythagoras. 400

But when those faints and fages were no more,
 That kept him true to Wisdom's righteous lore,
 His godly customs learnt he soon forsook,
 And to new paths his wandering feet betook.

Fond lovers first at midnight hour he pair'd; 405

Then, mix'd with thieves, in all their counsels shar'd.

With Treason oft he dwells, and him I view'd
 Late join'd with Murder stain'd in human blood.

With Coiners has he oft been known to dwell
 Remote from towns, in some sequester'd cell. 410

So much he shifts his partners and his place,
 'Tis hard t' affirm where best his steps to trace:

Yet have I hope to guide your course aright:
 Go—seek, when shade proclaims the middle night,
 The house of Sleep, there may'st thou Silence find,
 Where oft he rests remote from human kind. 416

A pleasing vale beneath Arabia's skies,
 From peopled towns and cities distant lies:

Two lofty mountains hide the depth below,
 Where ancient firs and sturdy beeches grow. 420

The sun around reveals his cheering day,

But the thick grove admits no straggling ray.

To

To pierce the boughs: immers'd in secret shades,
A spacious cave the dusky rock pervades.

The creeping ivy on the front is seen, 425

And o'er the entrance winds her curling green.

Here drowsy Sleep has fix'd his noiseless throne,

Here Indolence reclines with limbs o'ergrown

Through sluggish ease; and Sloth, whose trembling feet

Refuse their aid, and sink beneath her weight. 430

Before the portal dull Oblivion goes,

He suffers none to pass, for none he knows.

Silence maintains the watch, and walks the round

In shoes of felt, with sable garments bound;

And oft as any thither bend their pace, 435

He waves his hand, and warns them from the place.

The Angel comes and whispers in his ear:

Heaven bids thee now (and Heaven's high mandate
hear!)

Conduct Rinaldo, with his social powers,

In aid of Charles, to Paris' lofty towers; 440

That ere loud rumour shall their march disclose,

Their force may thunder on the Pagan foes.

No answer Silence gave, but bow'd his head

In signal of the heavenly charge obey'd.

Together now they take their speedy flight, 445

And soon in fruitful Picardy alight.

There

There Michael urges on each fearless band,
 (Wondrous to tell!) so swift from land to land,
 Ere day declin'd, to Paris' walls he brought
 The numerous troops, yet not a human thought } 450
 Perceiv'd that Heaven the miracle had wrought.

No less attentive, Silence; to pursue
 Th' important charge, around the legions threw
 A darken'd veil to intercept the sight,
 Though all the forces march'd in open light, 455
 While the thick cloud forbade each Pagan ear
 The shrill-mouth'd trump or deep-ton'd horn to hear.

What countless myriads, rang'd in deep array,
 That hour combin'd against the Christian sway!
 Who these can tell, may tell the plants that grow 460
 On fertile Apennine's o'er-shading brow;
 May number, where the surgy ocean laves
 Old Atlas' feet, the Mauritanian waves;
 Or count the stars, when Heaven with all its eyes,
 At midnight hour the lover's theft descries. 465

Frequent and deep the hallow'd bells around
 With dreadful echo give their warning sound.
 In every temple many a hand they rear,
 And breathe through many a lip the fervent prayer.
 Could blest immortals with desiring eyes 470
 Behold that wealth which men so highly prize,

Each

Each faint might hope in future to behold
His votive statue fram'd of purest gold.
The white-hair'd sire deplores his wretched state,
Reserv'd to drain the bitterest dregs of fate; 475
He calls his lov'd forefathers doubly blest,
Long clos'd in earth and laid for years at rest;
While those, whose younger breasts no fears appall,
Advance on every side to guard the wall;
There barons, paladins, and earls, and knights, 480
Kings, dukes, and lords, with all whom fame incites,
Soldiers from far, or natives of the land,
To die for CHRIST in arms undaunted stand.
All ardent urge the king each bridge to lower,
And on the Saracens their fury pour; 485
With joy he sees the warriors' noble fires,
But prudence checks what patriot zeal inspires.
Meantime he bids in various parts dispose
Their generous ranks against th' invading foes.
Where strong the wall, less thick the troops ascend,
But lines on lines each weaker pass defend. 491
Some watch the huge machines; and some prepare
With sulphurous flame to meet the storm of war.
While wary Charles in no fix'd place abides,
But through the town for every chance provides. 495

Now fierce in arms Marfilius prefs'd the plain
 With all his squadron drawn from distant Spain.
 There Serpentino and Ferrau were found,
 Grandonio, Ifolero, names renown'd.

There Balugantes shone with equal might, 500
 And Falfirones, well approv'd in fight:
 There, on the left, beside the winding flood
 Of silver Seine, Sobrino, Pulian stood,
 With Dardinello, brave Almontes' son,
 Oran's huge king, for giant stature known: 505
 There Sarza's king, impatient to engage,
 Blasphemes aloud, nor curbs his impious rage.

As eager flies in buzzing legions play,
 Midst the warm sunshine of a summer's day,
 Where rural vessels have allur'd their taste, 510
 Or the sweet relicks of the late repast:
 As round the ripening grapes of purple dye,
 The plummy race in busy clusters fly:
 So to the fierce assault the Moors repair,
 While shouts and barbarous clamours rend the air. 515
 The wary Christians from their rampart's height,
 With javelins, darts, and swords, maintain the fight,
 With stones and mingled fire; unmov'd they stand,
 And dare the fury of the Pagan band:

And

And oft as this, now that, ill-fated bleeds, 520

Another fearless to his place succeeds.

Back to the fosse the Saracens withdrew,

So thick the weapons of the faithful flew.

High on his banner, that with crimson glow'd,

The Sarzan Rodomont a lion shew'd, 525

Whose savage mouth disdain'd not to receive

The curb a courtly damsel seem'd to give :

The beast bespeaks the knight; the beauteous dame

Whose gentle hands the lordly lion tame,

Bespeaks the charms of Stordilano's heir, 530

Granada's princess, Doralis the fair ;

For whom he wrought such deeds of endless fame ;

Nor knew her yielded to a stranger's flame.

At once a thousand ladders rais'd in air,

With crowded steps the swarming soldiers bear : 535

A second urges him who foremost leads

The daring way, and him a third succeeds.

Through courage some, and some attack through fear ;

Though girt with dangers, none must tremble here ;

For Rodomont o'erlooks the dreadful fray, 540

And wounds or kills who dares desert the day.

The king of Algiers scorns his arms to wield,

But where dire peril frowns upon the field :

In that dread hour, when others to the skies
Breathe fervent vows, he God's high power defies. 545
To fence his breast a serpent's jointed scale
Supply'd the corslet tough and plated mail;
These arms his grandfire wore, whose impious might
Would Heaven invade with Babel's towery height;
Who fought to drive th' Almighty from his throne, 550
And make the empire of the stars his own.

Stern Rodomont a second Nimrod stood,
Like him unconquerable, fierce, and proud:
He little heeds what guards the passes keep,
How strong the bulwarks, or the fosse how deep; 555
Headlong he plunges in—he wades—he flies—
Above his breast the troubled waters rise:
All drench'd and grim with ooze he makes his way,
While round him arrows, flames, and engines play
In rattling storms—As through the sedgy moor, 560
Where spreads our Malean plain, the woodland boar
Lifts his strong chest, around his tusks he throws,
And breaks through all that would his course oppose:
So the fierce Pagan lifts his shield on high,
And scorns the towering walls, and threats the sky. 565

Now from the fosse stern Rodomont attains
The firmer land, and now the summit gains,

Where

Where the broad ramparts form a platform wide,
To range the Christian files on either side ;
Where many a foldier, many a knight and lord 570
Feel the dire edge of his resistless sword.

Heads, arms, are lopt—while from the lofty towers
Down the steep fosse the sanguine torrent pours.

His buckler cast behind, he grasp'd his steel
With either hand, and on Arnolpho fell; 575

A duke, who came from where the Rhine, that laves
The neighbouring meads, is lost in briny waves ;

Not more the wretch devoted 'scapes his ire,
Than heaps of sulphur 'scape the wasting fire ;
Swift thro' his neck the bloody falchion sped, 580
There heav'd the dying limbs, here roll'd the gasping
head,

The Flemings first his dreadful fury feel :

The Normans next distain his smoking steel.

Orghetto of Maganza sinks to rest :

Aim'd at his front the weapon through his breast 585

Divides his bleeding corse : Then from above

He Andropino and Moschino drove ;

Headlong they fell—the first was wont to shine

In priestly robes : the last in draughts of wine

Steep'd all his hours : like bane or viper's blood 590

He shunn'd to taste the cooling limpid flood.

Lo! here he dies, and more regrets his death,
 In water's loathsome drench to yield his breath,
 Sever'd in two provincial Lewis lies;
 Through Arnold of Thoulouse the weapon flies. 595
 Oberto, Claudio, Dionysius pour
 Their souls, with Hugo, in a stream of gore,
 Near these of Paris four to death succeed:
 Ambaldo, Odo, and Gualtoro bleed,
 With Satallones—heaps on heaps they fell, 600
 Nor can the Muse their names and country tell.

Not less behind the swarming troop prevail;
 They fix the ladders, and the bulwarks scale:
 But 'twixt the walls and second rampire steep,
 Where sinks the fosse, all horrible and deep, 605
 The Christians from th' interior works renew
 A strong defence against the Pagan crew;
 With spears and darts they rain an iron cloud,
 To check the numbers of th' advancing crowd;
 And soon had check'd, but that the dauntless might
 Of Ulien's son * inspir'd and urg'd the fight. 610
 He drives them on, and each though loth obeys,
 With threatenings these incites, and those with praise:
 Who turns a step to fly, his fate receives:
 His breast he pierces, or his helmet cleaves; 615

* RONOMONT.

And

And down the steep he drives so huge a train,
That scarce the fosse their numbers can contain.

While thus compell'd the rude barbarians go,
Or tumble headlong to the depth below,
The king of Sarza every muscle strains, 620
And lo ! (as if a strength of wing sustains
Each agile member) with a wondrous bound
Leaps o'er the fosse, and lights upon the ground
With all his armour's weight, though yawning wide,
Full thrice ten feet it stretch'd from side to side. 625

Meantime our legions in the depth below
Have plac'd their snares to catch th' incautious foe;
Serewood and pitch beneath the banks they hide,
And many a vessel closely rang'd, supply'd
With nitre, oil, or sulphur, to conspire 630
In one vast blaze to spread the murderous fire.

Now from the trench's depth the Moors assail,
And strive, with many a ladder rear'd, to scale
The town's last works—when at a signal given
From different parts, the bursting fires are driven 635
Amid the foe—huge conflagration rolls
From side to side, and mounting to the poles
Might dry the vapoury moon, while dark as night
Thick smoke obscures the sun and blots the light;

And rumbling peals re-echo long and loud, 640
Like thunders breaking from a fearful cloud.

Now frantic sounds in mingled tumults rise,
Of dreadful howlings, groans, and dying cries;
As by their leader's cruel rashness slain,
One wretched fate involv'd the Pagan train, 645
While the flame crackling on their members prey'd,
And with their shrieks a horrid concert made,
Aloft in air their groaning spirits soar,
Their bodies, soon consum'd, are seen no more;
While he, from whom their dreadful sufferings rise, 650
Fierce Rodomont escapes, and as he flies
High bounding o'er the fosse that yawns below,
Lights on his feet amidst the trembling foe.
But when he turns to view th' infernal vale,
And sees on every side the flames assail 655
His social bands, and hears their shrieks and cries,
Impious he raves, and loud blasphemes the skies.

While thousands here a strife unequal wag'd,
Where ruthless war with death and horror rag'd,
King Agramant, before his army's head, 660
The fierce assault against a portal led,
Where less perchance he deem'd the Christian powers
Prepar'd in arms to guard their threaten'd towers.

With

With him in field king Bambirago shin'd,
And Baliverfo, basest of mankind! 665
And many a chief, with others long inur'd
To fields of fight, and well in mail secur'd.
But, all unthought, the king of Afric there
Found the strong sinews of the Christian war:
Imperial Charles, with him a generous train, 670
King Salomone, and the noble * Dane:
Each Angelino there his station took,
With either Guido and Bavaria's duke †,
Unnumber'd more, of less reputed name,
Who from the Fleming, Frank, and Lombard came:
Each Pagan warrior to new fame aspires, 676
Nor less each Christian glows with generous fires:
All anxious in their sovereign's fight to gain
The meed and praise which loyal deeds obtain.
Thick from the walls, like hail, the arrows pour, 680
And whelm th' assailants with an iron shower:
From either host, in deafening clamour, rise
Tumultuous shouts, and mingle in the skies.
But leave we Charles and Agramant awhile,
And to the Mars of Afric turn our stile, 685
Who left within the trench his hapless powers,
Where, dire to see! the flame each limb devours;

* UGERO.

† NAMUS.

And

And o'er the fosse that girt the city round,
Securely lights within the hostile ground.

Soon was the fatal Saracen espy'd, 690
Known by his foreign arms and scaly hide;
Where weak old age, and those unnerv'd with fear,
To catch each rumour lend a trembling ear.
They wring their hands, loud cries and groans ascend,
And shrill laments the starry region rend. 695
To houses some, and some to temples run:
Each seeks by flight the threaten'd death to shun;
But this to few the murderous falchion yields,
That whirling round the furious Pagan wields,
As 'midst the harmless herds by Ganges' waves, 700
Or in th' Hircanian fields, the tiger raves;
The savage Pagan thus unpitied slew
Not martial squadrons, but a heartless crew;
Mere vulgar souls, that ne'er in arms could vie,
Souls only worthy to be born and die. 705
Thence to St. Michael's bridge with eager haste
Fierce Rodomont the timorous people chac'd.
Alike with him the lord, the servant, fares;
His ruthless hand nor saint nor sinner spares.
Religion to the priest is no defence, 710
Nor to the babe avails its innocence;

Nor

Nor dames nor virgins find relenting grace
For lovely eyes, or for a blooming face;
Nor hoary age is safe—against the foes
Not more the Pagan proofs of valour shows 715
Than cruel thirst of blood—sex, rank, and age
Fall undistinguish'd by his fiend-like rage.
Nor this fell king, of impious kings the worst,
On human lives exhausts his wrath accurs'd;
Against the senseless domes his arm conspires, 720
The sacred fane, the stately roof, he fires;
The strongest pillars in his grasp he took,
And from its base the nodding mansion shook!

While thus the tyrant sword and fire employ'd,
And burnt the town, and lives on lives destroy'd, 725
Had Agramant without alike prevail'd,
Paris had sunk, and all her glory fail'd:
But this the Paladin forbade, who came
From distant Albion to the field of fame.
Heaven will'd when Rodomont at first, engag'd 730
In blood and slaughter, through the city rag'd,
That Clarmont's leader *, with auxiliar powers,
By Silence brought, should reach the suffering towers,
Six thousand archers first, with banner spread,
He sent on foot, by gallant Edward led; 735

* RINALDO.

With

With these two thousand horse, whose chosen bands,
All lightly arm'd, brave Arimon commands;
Who, near Saint Martin and Saint Denis gate,
Might enter Paris, and relieve her state.

Then, higher up the Seine, with circling course, 740
Himself conducts the remnant of his force,
With barks and bridges fram'd to pass the tide,
Whose depth the eager troops to ford deny'd,
All safely past, and every bridge with care
Behind destroy'd, he forms in rank of war 745
His various powers; but first he summons all
The knights and barons; each obeys his call;
He mounts a height, whence every eye and ear
May view his gesture, and his speeches hear. 749

Then thus—'Tis yours, O chiefs! to lift in praise
Your hands to Heaven, who dooms your name to raise;
Chace from yon sacred walls our impious foe,
Two princes shall to you their safety owe:
Your sovereign first, whose hopes on you depend
To guard his freedom, and his life defend: 755
Then royal Charles, whose virtues have excell'd
Whoe'er on earth has rule imperial held:
With these full many a king, and chief of fame,
Of various countries and of various name.

Thus

Thus while your arms preserve yon grateful town, 760
Not only Paris shall your succours own;
Paris, whose sons now stand a heartless train,
Less fearing for the woes themselves sustain,
Than for their helpless wives and children's sake,
Who equal danger with themselves partake; 765
And holy maids, whom cloister'd walls enclose,
This day perchance defrauded of their vows;
But every country far and near, whose laws
Submit to CHRIST, and own his hallow'd cause.
If once, by public voice, the ancients gave 770
A civic crown to him, whose arms might save
A single life—what honours must be yours,
Whose aid unnumber'd souls from death secures?
Should hostile force destroy yon sacred wall,
Soon Italy and Germany may fall, 775
With every realm that worships him who sign'd
His blood a ransom for redeem'd mankind.
Lo! duty bids us with their arms unite,
Who for one cause, for one religion fight!
Soon shall I lead your victor-bands to throw 780
In disarray the legions of the foe,
That all unskill'd in labours of the plain,
Appear a weak, unarm'd, and heartless train.

With

With words like these address'd Rinaldo fir'd
 Th' attentive leaders, and his host inspir'd; 785
 He said; the troops proceed in fair array,
 Nor drums, nor shouts, their eager march betray.
 His orders given, the Paladin pursu'd
 His rapid course along the winding flood,
 Beyond Zerbino's bands—when now appear 790
 Oran's huge king, and king Sobrino, near;
 Who, first of Afric's sons, with dauntless air,
 Their weapons to receive the foes prepare.

With shouts the Christians give the trumpet breath:
 Each shrinking Pagan owns the blast of death. 795
 Rinaldo now, with martial ardor prest,
 His courser spurs, and bears his lance in rest;
 No longer in the ranks remains confin'd,
 But leaves the Scots an arrow's flight behind.
 As when a whirlwind's rage resistless flies 800
 Before a tempest gathering in the skies;
 So, darting from the files, th' intrepid knight
 Impels Bayardo to the wish'd-for fight.

Soon as the Paladin was seen in arms,
 The conscious Moors presage approaching harms: 805
 See in each hand the fearful javelin shake,
 The trembling knee in every stirrup quake!

Alone

Alone king Puliano knows not fear,
 Who little deem'd Rinaldo's arm so near;
 Firm o'er his spear he bends, and aiming just, 810
 In all his strength collects him to the thrust;
 With either spur he gores his fiery steed,
 And all the reins abandons to his speed:
 While he, whose blood in Amon's veins had run,
 Whose deeds might speak him Mars' redoubted son,
 Displays at full what art or grace can yield, 816
 To crown the glory of the dreadful field.

Alike each chief his threatening spear address'd
 With skilful aim against the adverse crest,
 But far unlike th' event!—one breathless lies, 820
 Slain in the flock; one gains the victor's prize.

His trusty lance the knight in rest replac'd,
 And next Oran's gigantic sovereign fac'd.
 No buckler could the fatal wound prevent,
 Deep in his belly's rim the weapon went, 825
 And holding on its course without control,
 From the vast body drove the little soul.
 The steed, inur'd long sultry hours to sweat
 Beneath his giant lord's unwieldy weight,
 To good Rinaldo seem'd his thanks to pay, 830
 Who freed him from the burthen of the day.

His

His javelin broke, Rinaldo turns his steed
Swift as if wings impell'd his rapid speed;
With desperate sway Fusberta round he wields,
Before whose edge the brittle armour yields: 835
Shields lin'd with hides, or fenc'd with plated wood,
Turbans and quilted vests, distain'd with blood,
Not more defence against his sword oppose,
Than grass against the scythe, or corn when Boreas
blows.

The foremost band was now dispers'd and fled; 840
When to the fight his van Zerbino led:
Each spurs his courser on the adverse host,
And soon the closing space between is lost.
They meet, they shock—but meet with chance unlike;
The Scots alone with conquering weapons strike. 845
A sudden chillness every Moor oppress'd;
A sudden ardor swell'd each Scottish breast.
The troops of Afric, struck with panic fear,
In every Christian think Rinaldo near.
Sobrino now to combat moves, while all 850
His troops obey, nor wait the herald's call.
This squadron o'er the rest might honour claim,
For arms, for valour, and its leader's fame.
His Dardinello brought, but ill secur'd
In tatter'd arms, and worse to fight inur'd; 855

While

While on his head a shining helm he plac'd,
And every limb in jointed armour 'cas'd.

The following squadron Ifolero led;
Then Thrafo, duke of Mar, his banner spread.

Now Ariodantes, adding to his name 860
Albania's dukedom, with his warriors came,
Where Ifolero bravely he beheld
With forces of Navarre invade the field.

Shrill trumpets mix'd with many a barbarous found
Join the hoarse drums; wheels clatter o'er the ground;
Huge engines creak; stones rattle from the sling; 866
From twanging bows unnumber'd arrows sing;
While louder clamours seem to rend the skies,
Triumphant shouts, and groans, and dying cries:

Such is the din where falling Nilus roars, 870
And deafens, with his surge, the neighbouring shores!
From either army storms of arrows fly,
Whose dismal shadows intercept the sky;

While sultry vapours mix'd with dust ascend,
And black as night in clouds condens'd extend. 875
Now these, now those, to fickle chance give way;

Lo! this pursues, and that deserts the day.
One breathless here is stretch'd; beneath him slain
His prostrate foe lies bleeding on the plain.

When spent with toil one squadron seems to yield, 880
Another hastens to sustain the field.

Now here, now there, the throng of arms increas'd;
There thrust the foot, and here the horsemen press'd.
The earth on which they fought, impurpled grew,
And chang'd her green for robes of sanguine hue: 885
Where flowrets lately deck'd th' enamell'd way,
Now horse and man in mingled carnage lay.

First of the field Zerbino's might appears
Beyond the promise of his early years;
While to his band, which newly here he sway'd, 890
Brave Ariodantes deeds of worth display'd.
Two bastards, Mosco and Chelindo, bred
In Arragon of Calabruno dead;
And one, who late from Barcelona came,
Calamidorus, not unknown to fame, 895
To seek Zerbino's death, around him press'd,
And to his courser's flank their spears address'd:
Pierc'd by their spears he fell; with him to ground
Zerbino fell, but fell without a wound:

When soon recovering on his feet he rose, 900
T'avenge his courser on th' exulting foes.
Through Mosco first (who rashly hop'd to take
The knight dismounted and his prisoner make)

He

He thrust his blade with unabated force,
And laid on earth a pale and lifeless corse. 905

When now Chelindo saw his brother slain,
He rag'd, and 'gainst Zerbino spurr'd amain
His trampling steed; but heedful of the shock,
The reins Zerbino seiz'd, and aim'd a stroke
That laid the beast on earth, no more to rise, 910
No more to need from generous corn supplies,
Zerbino with such force the steel impell'd,
At once the courser and his lord he fell'd.

Calamidorus, who beheld them slain,
Scar'd at the chance, turn'd round his horse's rein. 915
Stay, traitor, stay—(enrag'd Zerbino cries)
And aims a blow behind him as he flies:

The sword fell short and miss'd the knight's intent,
Yet miss'd not far—behind the wretch it went,
A furious passage through the crupper found, 920
And brought the courser lifeless to the ground.

The rider quits his seat, in hopes to gain
On foot his safety, but he hopes in vain:
Duke Thraso passing by (so will'd his fate)
O'erturn'd and crush'd him with his courser's weight.

His falchion Ariodantes whirl'd around, 926
Which Attalico and Margano found:

But chief the strokes his deathful weapon dealt,

Etearchus and Cassimirus felt :

The former couple wounded left the plain ; 930

The last, more luckless, by his arm were slain.

Alike Lurcanio marks of prowess show'd,

Who round confusion, death, and terror strow'd.

Deem not that less in field the conflict rag'd,

Than where the squadrons near the stream engag'd :

Nor think the army lagg'd behind, which brought 936

By Clarence' noble duke, the battle fought :

This fierce the banner'd powers of Spain defy'd,

While equal Fortune paus'd on either side.

Alike in both, foot, horse, and chieftains wield 940

Their skilful weapons to dispute the field.

Oldrado first and Pharamond appear ;

The valiant dukes of York and Glo'ster near ;

With these bold Richard earl of Warwick shines ;

And Henry, duke of Clarence, guides the lines. 945

By turns they chace, by turns are backward borne,

As to the breeze of May quick shifts the standing corn ;

Or as the sea, whose waters ne'er repose,

Plays on the strand with ceaseless ebbs and flows ;

Till Fortune, that had held in equal scale 950

Each adverse host, bade Albion's force prevail

Against

Against the Moor—Intrepid Glo'ster's force
Hurl'd Mattaliffa headlong from his horse;
And Baricondo, in the fatal strife,
To noble Clarence yields his forfeit life. 955

The Moors no longer wield their arms in fight,
But quit their ranks and turn their backs to flight.

Ferrau, who distant thence till now engag'd,
On king Marfilius' side the battle wag'd;
Soon as the flying standards he beheld, 960

The slaughter'd troops, and half his army quell'd,
His foaming courser spurr'd, and instant flew
Amidst the thickest of the warring crew;
Where first he saw fall headlong to the plain,
Cleft through the head-piece, young Olympio slain:

Once was he skill'd in sweetest lays to sing 966
Soft notes responsive to the tuneful string;
And boasted with his harp and voice to move
The sternest breast to blandishment and love.

Well if contented with this humbler fame, 970
He ne'er had fought the warrior's dangerous name,
But loath'd the buckler, quiver, shield, and lance,
That wrought his downfall in the fields of France.

When now Ferrau, who priz'd him dear, beheld
The stripling pale and bleeding on the field, 975

For this his ruthless bosom sorrow'd more
 Than all the thousands that were slain before.
 Against the victor swift his rage he bent,
 Sheer through his casque the steel resistless went,
 Sever'd between the brows his gasping head, 980
 Cleft to the breast, and hurl'd him with the dead.
 Nor thus appeas'd, he whirl'd around his blade,
 Through helm and mail its edge a passage made.
 Now here, now there, he hew'd his bloody way,
 And sudden chang'd the fortune of the day. 985

Now Agramant collects a chosen force
 (Drawn from the walls) of mingled foot and horse;
 These, guided by the king of Fez, he sent
 To guard his camp that stretch'd in wide extent,
 On which th' Hibernian chiefs their forces bent. 990

This task perform'd, the monarch summons all
 The remnant powers; they thicken at his call.
 These to the charge with rapid haste he leads,
 Where near the stream the fight his presence needs:
 Beneath him rang'd, a vast innumerable throng 995
 (His army's better half) now pours along:
 So loud their march, the Scots suspended hear,
 They leave their ranks and stain their fame with fear.

Alone

Alone Zerbino and Lurcanio stay,
With Ariodantes, in the dreadful day. 1000

Zerbino still unhors'd perchance had died,
But that Rinaldo timely aid supply'd.

The glorious Paladin had driven in flight
A hundred banners from the fatal fight,

When to his ear, dispers'd by ready fame, 1005
The tidings of Zerbino's danger came.

He heard, and turn'd his steed with generous ire,
Where from the field he saw the Scots retire,

And thus aloud—Ah! whither would ye haste?
What shameful panic has your arms disgrac'd? 1010

Great is your praise, from circling foes to run,
And leave unhors'd, alone, your monarch's son!

Then from his squire a mighty spear he took,
And Prusio king of Alvarecchia struck,

Who met the weapon on his breast, and left 1015
His lofty steed, of feat and life bereft:

His javelin broke, Fusberta next he drew,
And rushing fierce on Serpentino flew,

Who on his shield a star conspicuous bore,
And armour, forg'd by fatal magic, wore: 1020

Yet fell the sword with such resistless sway,
That stunn'd and breathless on the plain he lay.

When the brave chief of Caledonia's band
Beheld the wish'd relief, his ready hand
A courser seiz'd from those that o'er the plains, 1025
Freed from their riders, ran with loosen'd reins.
In happy time the vacant seat he gain'd;
For lo! with many a gallant troop sustain'd,
Young Dardinel and Agramant appear,
The kings Sobrino and Balastro near. 1030
But fearless from his courser he survey'd
The thickening crowd, and, whirling round his blade,
Now this, now that, dispatch'd to shades of hell,
The lives, which mortals lead on earth, to tell.
Rinaldo, who, with generous ardour fir'd, 1035
To vanquish those of highest name aspir'd,
On Agramant, who tower'd in arms above
A thousand chiefs, Bayardo swift he drove
With fidelong shock, and sent, with thundering force,
To earth at once the horseman and the horse. 1040

While thus without the walls the hosts engag'd,
Where mutual hatred, death, and horror rag'd,
In Paris Rodomont the people slew,
And fire amidst the domes and temples threw.
Imperial Charles, who thence at distance fought, 1045
Nor saw, nor heard, what woes the Pagan wrought;

And

And now intent auxiliar force to gain,
Receiv'd within the gates the British train,
By Arimon and gallant Edward led:
When lo! a squire, his visage pale with dread, 1050
Appears, and oft in undistinguish'd cries
Exclaims, ere breath his further speech supplies.

This day behold the Roman empire lost!
This day has CHRIST abjur'd the Christian host!
This day some Demon, 'scap'd from deepest hell, 1055
Forbids us longer in these walls to dwell.

Satan (no less a fiend such rage can breathe)
Deforms the wretched town with woe and death.
Ah! turn and see where blackening to the skies,
From crackling flames the smoky volumes rise! 1060

He said, and, while he spoke, th' Imperial chief
The mingled clamours heard that claim'd relief,
And saw the ruddy blaze—As one who hears
The sacred bells that tinkling in his ears,
Proclaim the fire, to others first reveal'd, 1065
Though most his loss from him alone conceal'd:
So look'd the monarch when the truth he knew,
When the dire prospect open'd to his view:
Around him he collects a chosen force,
And to the city's square with rapid course 1070

His

His banner turns, for thence the tumult came,
There fierce the Pagan raves with sword and flame:
There Charles beholds with cruel carnage spread
Th' impurpled earth, the dying and the dead.

END OF THE SIXTH BOOK.

THE A. R. M. E. N. T.

SEVENTH BOOK

OF

O R L A N D O .

THE A R G U M E N T.

CHARLES and his Paladins go against Rodomont, and at last compel him to leave the city. He repasses the Seine, and hears of the rape of Deralis by Mandricardo. Rodomont being gone, the general battle is renewed with great fury on both sides. Acts of Dardinello; he kills Lurcanio, and is himself killed by Rinaldo. The Pagans give ground, till the rout becomes universal, and they are compelled to retire to their entrenchments. Night adventure of Medoro and Cloridano, to bury the body of their master. Angelica finds Medoro wounded; she cures his wound, and becomes enamoured of him. Their marriage and departure for India.



THE
SEVENTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.

AND now imperial Charles with anguish view'd
His slaughter'd people in their blood embru'd,
His city burning—while, with fury swell'd,
Fierce Rodomont the square triumphant held,
And scorn'd the world in arms—one dreadful hand 5
The falchion shook, one wav'd the blazing brand.
Now furious on the palace gates he struck ;
The lofty gates resounded to the shock.
From the high roof the Christians hurl'd below
Huge broken fragments thundering on the foe. 10
None costly piles of ancient splendor spar'd ;
Fair marble domes one common ruin shar'd ;
Pillars and beams o'erlaid with fretted gold,
The stately works their fathers priz'd of old.

Before

Before the gate the king of Sarza press'd, 15
 With jointed scales that arm'd his head and breast.
 So when the serpent, issuing from the brakes,
 With spring return'd his squalid coat forsakes;
 Proud of his new-gain'd spoils and youth renew'd,
 He glides along with fresher strength indu'd; 20
 Three tongues he darts, his eyes are red with fire,
 And, where he moves, his fellow brutes retire.

Nor stones nor darts the Pagan's fury stay:
 The crashing portal to his stroke gives way,
 While, from within, the pale and haggard crew 25
 Through many a breach their dire besieger view.
 The court is fill'd with death; loud clamours rise;
 The shrieking females join the soldiers cries;
 They beat their breasts, they fly from place to place,
 The portals and the genial beds embrace, 30
 Now threaten'd to receive a foreign race.

Such was their state, so near to ruin brought,
 When, with his barons, Charles the palace fought,
 And turning to the chiefs, whose might before
 Had oft been seen in danger's direst hour; 35
 Are ye not those, whose courage prov'd (he cry'd)
 Once Agolant in Aspramont defy'd?
 And say, shall aught that valour now repel,
 By which Troyano and Almontes fell,

†

With

With thousands more? Will you, O dire disgrace! 40

Shrink from one man of that detested race?

No—let this infidel your prowess find,

This infidel who massacres mankind!

Be still yourselves—the brave can death despise,

And dies contented if with fame he dies; 45

Your presence is my hope—whene'er you join

Your social arms, the victory is mine!

He said; and ceasing with his lance in rest,

Against the Saracen his courser press'd.

With him the Paladin Ugero came; 50

Namus, and Olinero, chiefs of fame!

With these Avino, and Avolio dar'd,

Otho and Berlingher the glory shar'd.

All these on Rodomont their spears unite,

Some on his breast, some on his helmet light. 55

As built on Alpine rocks, with stately pride

A castle, that has every force defy'd,

Unshaken stands, when whirlwinds sweeping round,

Tear oaks and beeches from the groaning ground;

Firm in himself the haughty Pagan stood, 60

Inflam'd with fury, and athirst for blood.

Secur'd from harm, the dragon's jointed scale

Impervious, made each sword and javelin fail.

And

And now, attending at their sovereign's call,
Each quits the gate and well-defended wall;
And hastes to battle, where his prince's fight
Swells every breast and strings each nerve for fight.
As when, amid the circus' bounds enclos'd,
Stands a fierce lioness, for sport expos'd,
If chance a lordly bull is loos'd to wage
The public combat with her threatening rage,
Her tawny cubs behold (unseen before)
The stately beast and hear his dreadful roar:
But if their dam with savage teeth invade
The bull's strong chest, they haste their dam to aid:
Now at his back, now at his paunch they fly,
And thirst in blood their tender paws to dye.
Against the Pagan thus the Christians drew:
From roofs and windows some their weapons threw:
Some closer press'd; while, all around him rain'd,
His head a ponderous shower of arms sustain'd.
Still grows his toil—still crowds to crowds succeed,
Though hundreds by his fatal prowess bleed.
His breath in shorter pantings comes and goes;
He sees, unless his arm can stem the foes,
While yet unhurt his strength and limbs remain,
Hereafter must he hope to escape in vain.

Now

Now here, now there he turns his baleful eyes,
And every pass with numbers clos'd espies.
Whoe'er has from the throng'd piazza view'd 90
The giddy populace in heaps pursu'd
By some wild bull, that all the day has met
With goads and wounds, by men and dogs beset:
He foams, he snorts, he drives them round and round,
And this, now that he tosses from the ground: 95
Such may he deem, but far more dreadful shows
The cruel African amidst his foes!
He mows down lives, as by the pruner's hand
Young vines and fallows lopt bestrow the land.

Thus dreadful Rodomont the carnage spread 100
Where'er he pass'd: at length o'er piles of dead
Retreating now the nearer Seine he views,
That from the ramparts to the plain pursues
Its silent course—the throngs around him press,
Urge him behind, nor let him part in peace. 105
As in Nomadia's or Massilia's shade,
The generous beast whom hunters bold invade,
Even while he flies with noble fury burns,
And, threatening, slowly to his woods returns:
So Rodomont, in whose high soul appears 110
No abject thought, hemm'd round with swords and
spears,

With darts and javelins like a bristled wood,
Slow drags his lingering steps to reach the flood.
With all his arms, he plunges in the tide ;
His nervous limbs the flashing waves divide. 115
Soon as he gain'd the shore, his ruthless mind
Again repented that he left behind
The town unsack'd ; again his thoughts aspire
Her sons to slay and wrap her walls in fire.
While thus he paus'd, one drawing near he view'd, 120
That soon with other cares his wrath subdu'd.

When Discord late receiv'd the high command
To kindle strife amidst the Pagan band,
She Fraud commission'd in her stead to keep
The convent's cells, nor let Contention sleep ; 125
Then Pride she call'd the partner of her way
To where encamp'd the Christian army lay :
These urge their speed, when to their fight appears
Afflicted Jealousy with jaundice fears :
With her a dwarf, from Doralis the fair 130
Dispatch'd to Rodomont the news to bear,
How Mandricardo late her tent assail'd,
When all her guards against his prowess fail'd.

Now with the dwarf arriving where the hand
Of Rodomont destroy'd each Christian band ; 135
They

They reach'd the Seine what time his silver tide
The Sarzan cross'd, who when the dwarf he spy'd,
His wrath he smooth'd, his lowering brow he clear'd,
And sudden gladness in his looks appear'd:
The dwarf he met, and with a smiling face : 140
How fares our dame, and whither bends thy pace?

Then he—Nor mine nor yours I call the dame
To whom another now asserts his claim :
But last day's fun, as in her tent she lay,
A single warrior hew'd his bloody way 145
Thro' all her guards, and thence, by force convey'd,
The royal fair his weeping captive made.

He said; when Jealousy stept forth and press'd
(Cold as an asp) the warrior to her breast.
Then Discord strikes her flint the fire to raise, 150
While Pride beneath the ready fewel lays:
Quick bursts the flame, through all the Pagan flies
The raging pest and flashes from his eyes:
He sighs, he groans, full horribly he roars,
Blaspheming Heaven and Heaven's immortal powers.
As when the tigress to her empty den 156
Too late returning, snuffs the track of men,
And finds her darling young ones borne away,
Nor hills, nor streams, her raging course delay:

Thus the dread Saracen with fury burns, 160
 Lead on! he cries, as to the dwarf he turns:
 He seeks no steed, nor car, but like the wind
 Flies o'er the plain, and leaves the war behind:
 No courser will he wait, resolv'd to take
 The first that Fortune's gift his own shall make. 165
 Then Discord, who his inmost soul survey'd,
 Turn'd to her sister Pride, and smiling said:
 The care be mine, where'er he roves the land,
 No horse but one shall meet his daring hand.

To Charles we turn, who now, the Pagan fled, 170
 Forbade the flames extinguish'd more to spread:
 His troops he marshall'd; some with ardor fir'd
 To guard the posts that chief their aid requir'd:
 The rest he sent against the Moorish train
 To meet their strongest force in open plain; 175
 Then, near Marcellus' gate, bids every band,
 Together join'd, in rank of battle stand,
 Their banners rang'd, he points their noble rage,
 And gives the trumpeter's signal to engage.

King Agramant against the knight* who lov'd 180
 Fair Isabella, single combat prov'd.
 With king Scbrino bold Lurcanio clos'd:
 Rinaldo stood against a troop oppos'd,

* ZERBINO.

Whom

Whom (Fortune smiling on his dauntless might)
He slew, dispers'd, o'erturn'd, and chac'd in flight. 185
So far'd the war—when Charles his legions brought
To charge the rear where king Marfilius fought:
The monarch leads th' assault—the hills around,
The vales return the drum's and trumpet's sound.
Already now the Pagans seem'd to yield, 190
And soon, with broken files, had left the field;
But Falsirones came, and at his side
Grandonio, both in greater dangers try'd;
With Balugantes, Serpentino fam'd,
And bold Ferrau, who thus aloud exclaim'd. 195

O friends belov'd! O! once of martial might!
O! brethren! yet maintain this arduous fight!
Think what rewards, what honours must attend,
Should Fortune on this day our arms befriend;
Think what our loss and never-ending shame, 200
If basely driven from such a field of fame!

A ponderous spear he wielded as he spoke,
And aim'd at Berlinger the forceful stroke;
Now Berlinger o'erthrown, his fatal blade
Eight hapless warriors near him prostrate laid. 205
In other parts what warlike numbers fell
Before Rinaldo, scarce the muse can tell:

Thou might'st have seen, amidst th' embattled field,
 The flying squadrons to his fury yield.
 No less Zerbino and Lurcanio, fir'd 210
 With martial heat, the tongue of praise inspir'd;
 Nor shall Zumara's king be left unslung,
 Brave Dardinello, from Almontes sprung;
 Seven chiefs, renown'd in arms, to earth he threw,
 Two senseless, one he wounded, four he slew. 215
 Nor yet th' example of his dauntless hand
 Could in their ranks detain his fainting band.
 The Moors in Setta and Zumara bred,
 Those of Morocco and Canara fled:
 But with the foremost fled Alzerbè's train, 220
 Whose flight the noble youth * oppos'd in vain:
 At length, with threats and prayers by turns address'd,
 He rous'd the flame in every generous breast.

If in your memory worthy yet to dwell
 Almontes lives—this present hour shall tell: 225
 This hour shall show, if midst his foes enclos'd,
 You leave in me his son to death expos'd.
 Stay! I conjure you—by my tender age,
 From which your hopes could future fame presage!
 Shall each brave chief by hostile swords be slain, 230
 And none revisit Afric's lov'd domain?

* DARDINELLO.

Here

Here let us rather die, than sink so low
 To wait the mercy of a Christian foe.
 O! then be firm—in this, my friends, remain
 Our dearest hopes, all other hopes are vain! 235
 Like us the foes have but two hands to wield,
 One soul to fire them, and one life to yield.

So spoke the generous youth, and speaking gave
 The earl of Athol to the greedy grave.
 The dear remembrance of Almontes ran 240
 Through Afric's host, and spread from man to man:
 William of Burnick, tall of stature, tower'd
 Above his peers, but Dardinello's sword
 Levell'd him with the rest—and near him rest
 His life from Arimon, and headless left; 245
 (A Cornish champion)—as he press'd the plain
 His brother hasten'd to his aid in vain,
 The warrior's falchion stretch'd him with the slain. }
 Through Bogio's bosom pierc'd the vengeful blade,
 And freed him from his promise lately made: 250
 Vainly he promis'd to his weeping wife
 Six moons should bring him back with fame and life.

Brave Dardinello near Lurcanio 'spy'd,
 By whom, but then o'erthrown, Dochino dy'd;
 He saw Altæus, dearer than his life, 255
 Attempt too late to fly the bloody strife.

Full at his nape the stroke Lurcanio aim'd,
 And stretch'd him dead : Almontes' son, inflam'd
 With thirst of vengeance, grasp'd his ready spear,
 And vow'd to Macon (did his Macon hear) 260
 Should slain Lurcanio that day's triumph grace,
 His empty arms within the mosque to place.
 Then through the ranks with rapid speed he flies,
 And to his side so well the lance applies,
 Pierc'd through and through he hurls him to the plain,
 And instant bids his followers strip the slain. 266

What tongue shall ask if Ariodantes mourn'd
 His brother's slaughter ? if in rage he burn'd
 With his own hand to give the vengeful blow,
 And Dardinello send to shades below ? 270
 In vain he raves—not more the Pagan foes
 Than thronging Christians his design oppose :
 Yet eager for revenge, now here, now there,
 He whirls his sword, breaks through, and mows the
 war.

To engage the Christian Dardinello flies, 275
 But thronging round him spears and javelins rise,
 And the thick press the knights to meet denies,
 One chief no less the Moorish troop destroys,
 Than one the English, Franks, and Scotch annoys ;

Yet

Yet these to close in battle fate withstands, 280
One doom'd to fall, but fall by greater hands,
Rinaldo there assails, breaks, scatters round
The foes, and hurls their standards to the ground:
And now he spurs Bayardo through the fight,
To prove the noble Dardinello's might, 285
And wondering on his shield the sign survey'd,
Which young Almontes' son with pride display'd;
He deem'd him brave whose venturous arm could
bear

The same device the earl * was seen to wear;
And found him brave, when round the ghastly plain
He saw the heaps his conquering hand had slain. 291
Then to himself—This noxious weed demands
(Ere yet it further spreads) my pruning hands.
Thus spoke the knight, and where he turns his face
The ranks recede, and every chief gives place: 295
Christians and Pagans to his passage yield,
Such awe his looks, such dread his sword impell'd.
But hapless Dardinello sole defies
Albano's † chief; to whom Rinaldo cries,

Poor boy! in evil hour to risk thy life, 300
That shield was left, thy pledge of future strife:

* ORLANDO.

† RINALDO.

I come

I come to prove how well with me in fight,
Thy hand defends that ensign red and white :
If here thou fail'st, thy force can ill contend
Those arms against Orlando to defend. 305

Then Dardinello thus—Hear one who dares
Protect those honours which in field he bears :
I trust these colours, red and white, proclaim
Less pledge of strife than pledge of future fame :
Think not, though young, to make me fly the field,
Or e'er to thee this glorious trophy yield. 311

My death alone on thee my arms bestows :
But Heaven th' event far other may dispose ;
And never, never shall my deeds disgrace
The lineal praise of my illustrious race. 315

He said ; and as he spoke with brandish'd sword
Intrepid rush'd on Mount Albano's lord :
A chilling fear each Pagan foe oppress'd,
And froze the blood in every panting breast ;
When stern Rinaldo, eager for the fight, 320
Resistless flew to engage the blooming knight.

A lion thus (that in the pasture views
A bull that ne'er the heifer yet pursues)
Springs on his prey—first aim'd the Pagan foe
Against Mambrino's helm the fruitless blow. 325

Now

Now learn (with smile severe Rinaldo cry'd)
 If this right hand can best the weapon guide.
 At once he spurr'd, and to the fiery horse
 Gave up the reins, when driven with matchless force
 Through his white breast the sword a passage found,
 Till at his back appear'd the grizzly wound: 331
 The steel drawn forth, drew forth the vital breath,
 And cold and pale the body sunk in death.
 Like some fair flower, whose vivid lustre fades,
 If chance the ploughman's share its stalk invades; 335
 Or heavy poppies, charg'd with dews or rain,
 That hang their heads low drooping on the plain:
 So from his face the rosy colour flies,
 So Dardinello sinks, and sinking dies:
 He dies, and instant with their chief is fled 340
 The strength, the courage of the host he led.
 As where huge works of human art restrain
 The floods that else would deluge all the plain,
 Whene'er the mounds are burst, the rushing tide
 With roaring noise escapes on every side: 345
 The powers of Afric thus, who scorn'd to yield
 While Dardinello's name inspir'd the field,
 Soon as they saw the leader breathless lie,
 Dispers'd and broken o'er the plains they fly.

What

What numbers fell where Ariodantes fought, 350
 Who next Rinaldo deeds of prowess wrought!
 These Lionel, and those Zerbino quell'd;
 All seem'd to strive who most in arms excell'd.
 Charles, mindful of his fame, the battle wag'd:
 There Olivero, Turpin, Guido rag'd; 355
 There Salamone fought, Ugero there engag'd.

When Agramant saw nothing could restore
 The day, nor hop'd to see Biferta more,
 The fate he could not shun resign'd to meet,
 His standards turn'd, he bade to sound retreat, 360
 Such was the panic of the routed host,
 That countless numbers in the Seine were lost.
 Each king and chief with sage Sobrino try'd
 The rest in order from the field to guide:
 But here nor king, nor sage, nor chief prevail'd 365
 With prayer or threat, such fear each breast assail'd,
 Soon to their camp retir'd, in dire dismay,
 The wretched Pagans in their trenches lay:
 When Charles, who meant not Fortune should be lost,
 Pursu'd the flying foe with all his host, 370
 But rising night his glorious ardor stay'd,
 And wrapt the warring world in friendly shade;
 Perchance by Heaven more swiftly sent, to give
 The creatures of his hand to breathe and live.

No more imperial Charles to Paris turn'd, 375
But pitch'd his tents without, where kindled burn'd
The frequent fires: the foes besieg'd, with care
Sink deep the trenches and the works repair,
O'erwatch the whole, bid every guard awake,
Nor all the live-long night their arms forsake. 380

The Saracens, whom chilling fears oppress,
Along their mournful lines in deep distress
Lament and weep, while half conceal'd and low,
The sighs break forth, and hush'd the sorrows flow.
Some for their slaughter'd friends or kindred groan,
Some, others' sufferings; some bewail their own; 386
And some, more wretched, with foreboding mind
Revolve still greater evils yet behind.

Two Moorish youths there were of humble race,
In Ptolomita was their native place; 390
Whose story told to every ear may prove
A rare example of unblemish'd love:
These, Cloridano and Medoro call'd,
Firm in good times, in evil unappall'd,
To Dardinello loyal friendship bore, 395
And late with him had cross'd from Afric's shore.
A hunter's life bold Cloridano led,
His limbs robust to strength and swiftness bred;

Medoro's

Medoro's opening youth but scarce began
To shade the rose with down and promise man. 400
Of all that join'd the Pagan's threatening arms,
Not one excell'd his mien and blooming charms:
Black were his eyes, his locks like golden wire;
So seems some angel of the heavenly choir! 404
These two, with numbers more, by chance ordain'd
To guard the works, the midnight watch maintain'd.

Medoro still (while tears his cheeks suffuse)
The dear remembrance of his lord renews,
Almontes' son, brave Dardinello slain,
Expos'd unburied on the naked plain: 410
When, turning to his friend, he thus express'd
The generous feelings of a loyal breast.

Shall he, O Cloridario, to the brood
Of wolves and ravens yield too precious food?
He, whose past goodness ever must awake 415
My grateful love, till life this frame forsake?
And, ah! should life for him in tribute flow,
Not all could pay the mighty debt I owe!
Then to yon heaps of carnage let me fly,
Where cold on earth his limbs dishonour'd lie; 420
Remain thou here, that if resistless fate
Decrees my death, thou may'st that death relate:

And

And should not Heaven my pious vows succeed,
At least posterity will praise the deed.

With speechless wonder Cloridano hears 425
Such faith and courage in such early years;
And (for he held him dear) he strives to make
The dauntless youth his rash design forsake.
But grief, like his, no comfort can control;
Nor reason change the purpose of his soul, 430
A grave on Dardinello to bestow,
Or in the great attempt his life forego.

When Cloridano long in vain had try'd
Each friendly plea—Yet let me share (he cry'd)
The pious task—I too aspire to raise 435
From such a death the meed of endless praise.
Should I, depriv'd of thee, Medoro, live,
What future joy can wretched being give?

This said; they point supplies their place to take,
Then leave the trenches and the camp forsake; 440
And soon arrive where, sunk in heavy sleep,
Our careless bands the watch no longer keep;
'Midst arms, and cars, and courfers stretch'd supine,
In slumber lock'd and drench'd in fumes of wine.
His steps awhile here Cloridano stay'd; 445
Shall I not seize the present hour (he said)

Now,

Now now, Medoro, on yon hostile train
To wreak my vengeance for my patron slain?
Here listen thou!—and watch with heedful eye,
Lest unawares some waking foe descry 450
Our bold attempt, while here my wrath I flake,
And through the camp our bloody passage make.

He said; and ceasing, o'er the trenches slept,
And first he came where learned Alpheus slept:
But late th' imperial court of Charles he fought, 455
In magic, herbs, and arts prophetic taught:
Here fail'd his skill, that skill so oft believ'd;
While to himself, the witlefs seer deceiv'd,
Long years of life had promis'd, safe from harms,
And death at last in his lov'd consort's arms. 460
Deep in his throat the sword the Pagan sent,
And his soul issu'd at the sanguine vent.
Then Palidon of Moncaliri bleeds,
Who thoughtless slept between the harness'd steeds.
Next Grillo, swill'd with wine, securely lay 465
In peaceful rest to doze the fumes away:
Large measures had he quaff'd, and still extends
In dreams the draught which Cloridano ends.
A Greek and Belgian perish'd near his side,
Who long by night the dice and goblet ply'd. 470

Thrice

Thrice happy! had they ply'd till reddening morn
From silver Indus made her wish'd return.

But Fate would lose on earth his sovereign power,
Could man with prescience read the future hour.

As the gaunt lion, at the savage call 475
Of hunger, overleaps the nightly stall;
Then kills, and rends the sheep with cruel paws,
To glut with bloody food his ravenous jaws:
The Pagan thus, amidst our senseless crew
Immers'd in slumber, helpless wretches flew: 480
Nor yet he rag'd with bold Medoro's steel,
Who scorn'd that vulgar lives his force should feel.

He came where duke Labretto lay enclos'd
By his lov'd consort's arms, in sleep repos'd:
No air could glide between, so close they lay, 485
Medoro's falchion lopt their heads away:
O envy'd death! for sure their souls conjoin'd
In like embrace, one happy stroke consign'd
To those blest regions to receive above
The meed of joy and never-dying love! 490
Malindo next he slew; and at his side,
Brave Ardelico and his brother dy'd,
The sons of Flanders' earl, whom lately prais'd
For martial virtue, Charles had newly rais'd

To knighthood's rank, and either gave to hold, 495
Mix'd with their arms, the fleur-de-lys of gold.

These from the field that glorious day he view'd
Their weapons bring with hostile gore bedew'd,
And promis'd each in Friza large domain:

But soon Medoro made such promise vain. 500

Thus slaughtering on, advanc'd th' insidious two;
At length they near the rich pavilions drew,
Where round the tent of Charles, in arms prepar'd,
The Paladins, by turn, maintain'd the guard.

Here from their bloody work the Pagans ceas'd, 505
And sheath'd their falchions and their steps repress'd.

First Cloridano led the way, to find
Their surest track; his friend pursu'd behind.

At length they came where, in a field of blood, 509
With falchions, bows, and shields, and lances strow'd,
Men mix'd with steeds, the poor with wealthy lay,
And kings with slaves reduc'd to common clay.

Fix'd on the sky Medoro bent his sight,
And thus address'd the regent of the night.

O sacred empress! by our fathers fam'd, 515

Who rightly thee their triple goddess nam'd!
Thou, who in heaven, in earth, or deepest hell,
Through various forms in glory canst excel!

Who

Who wear't a huntress' garb in woods to trace
The haunts of monsters and the sylvan race ; 520
Show me my murder'd lord in blood imbru'd,
Who, while he liv'd, thy hallow'd sports pursu'd.

At this, by chance or at his earnest prayer,
The moon resplendent through the vaporous air
Pierc'd the still gloom ; as when in virgin charms 525
She came all naked to Endymion's arms.

Paris with either camp receiv'd the beam :
The plains and mountains whiten'd in the gleam :
Martir and Liri's distant hills were bright,
This rising to the left, and that the right ; 530

But rays more dazzling mark'd the fatal plain
Where lay Almontes' valiant offspring slain.

As near his lord Medoro weeping drew,
Him by his arms and shield's device he knew ;
In accents low and murmurs scarcely heard 535
He breath'd his grief ; yet think not that he fear'd

To risk a being he no longer priz'd ;
His generous soul such abject thoughts despis'd ;
But most he fear'd some evil chance to find
T' obstruct the pious deed his soul design'd. 540

Now, on their shoulders laid, the friendly pair
The breathless corse, with zeal divided, bear.

Soon came the God who gives to day its birth,
The stars to chace from Heaven, the shades from
earth ;

When brave Zerbino, from whose virtuous breast 545
A general's duty drove ignoble rest,
Whose arm had chac'd the fearful Moors by night,
Return'd to seek the camp at dawn of light ;
With him a band of knights—these soon beheld
The distant friends slow moving o'er the field, 550
Now, now, my brother ! cast our load aside,
And urge our swiftness (Cloridano cry'd) ;
'Twere far unmeet, while from the deathful plain
We bear one corse, two living should be slain.

This said, he quits his hold, nor doubts to make
His friend Medoro now th' attempt forsake ; 556
But he, whose pious love more firm remain'd,
The whole dear burden by himself sustain'd.
Meanwhile the first his feet for safety ply'd,
And deem'd his lov'd Medoro at his side. 560
The horse, determin'd these should die or yield,
Some here, some there dispersing o'er the field,
Cut off the means of flight : their leader near
Inflames their zeal : by every mark of fear,
By every semblance, well observ'd, he knew 565
That these were warriors of the hostile crew.

Not far remote an ancient forest stood,
Perplex'd with thickening trees and dwarfish wood,
Where not a track the tangled paths display'd,
But foot of beasts that trod the gloomy shade: 570
Thither the Pagans fled, in hope to meet
Amid the friendly boughs a safe retreat.
Soon Cloridano came to where his ear
No more the sound of trampling horse could hear:
But when he miss'd his friend—What chance (he cry'd)
Could from myself my better self divide? 576
Thee could I leave, who late wert wont to share
My nearest thoughts? Is this my pious care?
Unknowing when or where, from thee I part,
Friend of my choice and brother of my heart! 580

He said; and speaking, through the winding shade
The track reprinted he before had made;
Sought what he left, and swift with panting breath
Returning trod the way that led to death,
He hears the foes, he hears the coursers' noise, 585
And nearer hears the riders' threatening voice;
And, ah! too late his dear Medoro knows,
Whom helpless and on foot a hundred horse inclose.
This troop Zerbino leads, and gives command
To seize the youth, who press'd on every hand, 590

At length unable longer to sustain
His honour'd burthen, lays it on the plain;
Yet hovering near, he still his lord attends,
And to the last his breathless charge defends.

So when, in deep-sequester'd mountain shades, 595
The hunter-troop a bear's retreat invades;
Around her young the savage mother howls
In dreadful anguish and with fury growls;
While inbred strength impels her oft to fly
On the bold foe, and deep in carnage dye 600
Her reeking jaws, maternal love restrains
Her rage, and with her cubs the beast detains.

Now Cloridano, hopeless of his state,
Yet fix'd in death to share Medoro's fate,
Swift from the quiver chose the pointed reed, 605
And took conceal'd his aim with bloody speed;
It reach'd a Scot, and, buried in his brain,
Hurl'd from his saddle lifeless to the plain,
At once the Christians turn'd with anxious view,
Exploring whence the murderous weapon flew: 610
Mean time another by the Pagan sent,
With equal aim to pierce the second went,
Who, while he loud enquir'd what unseen hand
Had drawn the bow, and rav'd amid the band,

The

The hissing dart drove on, his weazon cleft, 615
And while he spoke his tongue of speech bereft.

No more their chief Zerbino now repell'd
Th' indignant wrath that in his bosom swell'd,
But rushing on Medoro—Thou shalt bear
The guilt—he cry'd, and seiz'd his golden hair. 620
But, fixing on his face an earnest look,
Compassion kindled and forbade the stroke,
As thus the youth his pitying grace implor'd:
O! by that God, in Christian lands ador'd!
Steel not thy heart, Sir knight! but let me pay 625

The last sad honours to this sacred clay:
I ask not life—O! give me but to breathe
Till to his tomb my sovereign I bequeath.

Medoro thus his moving suit address'd,
In words to pierce the most obdurate breast: 630
Zerbino soon, his wrath decreasing, felt
His manly soul with tender sorrow melt;
When, lo! while yet the suppliant mourner pray'd,
A knight, by more than brutal fury sway'd,
To pity deaf, regardless of his lord, 635
With cruel spear the stripling's bosom gor'd.
With fierce displeasure good Zerbino view'd
The youth all pale and weltering in his blood.

Thou shalt not perish unreveng'd (he said)
And sudden turn'd upon th' offender's head 640
To wreak the deed ; but wheeling round, the knight
His courser spur'd and urg'd his rapid flight.

When Cloridano, where he stood conceal'd,
Beheld Medoro prostrate on the field,
He left the covert, cast aside the bow, 645
And rush'd in frantic rage amidst the foe,
From numerous swords his welcome fate he found,
And stain'd with gushing blood the thirsty ground ;
Till life fast ebbing with the vital tide,
He sunk contented by Medoro's side. 650

The Scots then follow'd where their chief they view'd,
Who through the woods his angry way pursu'd.
Long time in helpless state Medoro lay,
While vigour flow'd in purple streams away:
When, sent by fortune to his timely aid, 655
A damsel came in cottage weeds array'd ;
Of humble garb ! but of a form most rare,
Of soft demeanour and majestic air :
Angelica, through every region known,
The heirs of Cathay's imperial throne ; 660
Who joyful late her wondrous ring regain'd,
And every noble lover's vows disdain'd ;

But

But Love, who long had mark'd his slighted power,
Resolv'd to bear her cold contempt no more,
By poor Medoro took his watchful stand, 665
And brac'd his bow, and held his shafts in hand.

Soon as Angelica with sad survey
Beheld the youth, who pale and wounded lay,
Strange pity touch'd her while she listening hung
To hear the tale that falter'd on his tongue. 670

Once in a lovely mead, with searching view,
A plant she met whose virtues well she knew;
This now she sought, and gathering swift return'd
To where his slaughter'd lord Medoro mourn'd.
Amidst her way a simple swain she view'd, 675
Who through the forest on his horse pursu'd
A gentle heifer, that abroad to roam
(Then past two days) had left her rustic home.
The swain she led, where, issuing with his blood,
Fast and more fast Medoro's vigour flow'd. 680

The virgin from her palfrey now descends,
The peasant lighting on her steps attends;
The plant she bruises with a stone, and stands
Tempering the juice between her ivory hands.
This o'er his breast she sheds with sovereign art, 685
And bathes with gentle touch the wounded part:

The

The wound such virtue from the juice derives,
At once the blood is staunch'd, the youth revives;
Wondering he feels a sudden strength bestow'd,
And mounts the horse which late the shepherd rode;
Yet went not thence, till duly first dispos'd 691
He saw his breathless prince with earth inclos'd;
And, laid by noble Dardinello dead,
His Cloridano in one funeral bed.

The virgin to the shepherd's cot convey'd 695
The wounded youth, and there in pity stay'd
To wait his health restor'd; so deep her breast
Retain'd the thoughts which first his sight impress'd.

Begirt with hills and bosom'd in a wood,
Of structure neat, the peasant's dwelling stood, 700
Which late himself had rais'd; his faithful wife,
And children, partners of his humble life.
The damsel there Medoro soon restor'd
To wonted strength, but ah! meantime deplor'd
Her own deep wound, that rankled in her heart 705
With heavier anguish from a viewless dart.
Still, still she loves—and while her care is shown
To cure another's pains, forgets her own.
He gains, she loses strength; and now, by turns,
With cold she freezes, and with heat she burns. 710

From

From day to day improv'd his beauty shines:
She, hapless maid, with wasting sorrow pines,
Like fleecy snows that in the warmth of day
In heaps dissolve before the solar ray:
Sick with desire, from him she would receive 715
What only can her soul's dear cares relieve.
Hence to her virgin shame she loos'd the ties,
And gave her tongue the licence of her eyes;
Till he, unconscious of the wound he made,
Heard her with sighs implore his pitying aid. 720

O brave Orlando! O Circassia's king!
What are the virtues that unheeded spring
In breasts like yours! In vain your boasted fame;
Where now the meed your glorious labours claim?
O stern Ferrau! O thousands more unnam'd, 725
That oft her heart with truth and courage claim'd;
How would you now with jealous pangs behold
A rival's happy arms her limbs enfold!

Angelica, to sanctify her flame,
With holy marriage rites conceal'd the shame: 730
Love present smil'd, and to the nuptial bed
The shepherd's wife the blushing fair-one led.

One happy month, befitting where they dwell'd
In humble roof, a rustic feast they held.

The

The damsel, never absent from his sight, 735

Hangs on her lover with untir'd delight;

For ever round him glues her twining arms,

And clasps his neck, and kindles at his charms.

With him in lowly cot, or leafy bower,

By night, by day, she wastes the fleeting hour. 740

At morn and eve by crystal streams they stray,

Or trace the verdant meadow's flowery way,

At sultry noon they seek a gloomy cave,

Like that which from the storm a shelter gave,

What time the Trojan prince and Tyrian queen * 745

Their loves entrusted to the sacred scene.

Where'er a tree its verdant boughs display'd

O'er rills and founts to cast a waving shade,

The knife and pointed steel the bark impress'd,

And oft the rocks their sportive toys confess'd. 750

A thousand parts reveal'd their mutual flames,

A thousand places show'd the lovers' names,

Angelica and her Medoro twin'd,

In posied wreaths and amorous knots combin'd.

Now rolling time reprov'd the damsel's stay, 755

And urg'd her to resume her purpos'd way,

In India's realms, at rich Cathay to crown

Her dear Medoro on the regal throne.

* ÆNEAS and DIDO.

Around

Around her arm a golden circlet brac'd
Of rarest worth, with sparkling jewels grac'd, 760
In sign of brave Orlando's love she wore,
And long preserv'd the valu'd gift she bore.
This midst the isle of tears * she strangely kept,
(Where captive dames their cruel fortune wept.)
Now, wanting gold to give the simple pair, 765
The shepherd and his wife, whose honest care
Show'd, while the lovers shar'd their homely board,
Such friendly welcome as their means afford;
This from her arm she drew, and bade the swain
The valu'd treasure for her sake retain. 770

Now tow'rd's the steepy hills the lovers ride,
The steepy hills that France from Spain divide,
Thence seek some vessel, with propitious gale
To loose for eastern lands the spreading sail;
And soon a vessel found, that safely bore 775
The happy pair to India's spicy shore.

* E B U D A.

END OF THE SEVENTH BOOK.

THE ARGUMENT
OF THE
EIGHTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.
Aristotle is delighted with presents from I. de la... who
leads Andronicus and Sophocles to conduct him to the
voyage. They reach the city of Licia, whence Aristopho
pursues his journey alone by land. His adventures with the
Egyptian Colossus and the magician Cirio. His meeting
with the... (Gryphon and...)
... where they are hospitably received by the
Christian regent... Gryphon hears unwelcome
news of his mother's... he reports in French of her
and meets her in company with... her new lover
he is deceived by her... they all go together to Pa-
... where they are... by a... and...
... of...
... of... Volant of Gryphon.
Mantano by... obtaining the prize of the joust and...
... is... but to... afterwards being let at liberty
... to...
... all the... by

THE ARGUMENT.

ASTOLPHO is dismissed with presents from Logistilla, who sends Andronica and Sophryfina to conduct him safely on his voyage. They reach the gulph of Persia, whence Astolpho pursues his journey alone by land. His adventures with the giant Coligorant and the magician Orilo. His meeting with the two brothers Gryphon and Aquilant. All three enter Jerusalem, where they are hospitably received by the Christian regent, Sanfonetto. Gryphon hears unwelcome news of his mistress Origilla; he departs in search of her, and meets her in company with Martano, her new lover: he is deceived by her speeches: they all go together to Damascus, where they are entertained by a knight, and agree to be present at a tournament given by king Norandino. The tournament. Cowardice of Martano, Valour of Gryphon. Martano by fraud obtains the prize of the jousts, and Gryphon is openly put to shame; afterwards being set at liberty, he, to revenge his disgrace, makes great slaughter among the people of Damascus, till he is at length appeased by Norandino.



THE
EIGHTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.

ASTOLPHO now in India seems to mourn
His exil'd state, and languish to return;
As promis'd oft by her, whose power had quell'd
Alcina's navy, and her flight compell'd:
Her's was the care to speed him on his way,
To shield from danger and prevent delay:
For this a galley had she launch'd, the best
That ever plough'd the curling ocean's breast,
And left (for so her fears had oft divin'd)
Alcina should impede his course design'd,
She Andronica sends with ships prepar'd,
And fair Sophrosyne, the knight to guard;
Till in his sight th' Arabian sea appear'd,
And through the Persic tide his vessel steer'd.

She bids him rather coast the Scythian shore,
And Nabatei and India's realms explore,
With Persia's gulph, than tempt the seas where rave
Eternal winds that swell the northern wave,
And where, for many a month, no sun displays
Above th' horizon his enlivening rays.

Thus all dispos'd, the dame with friendly heart
Now grants the duke permission to depart;
And, lest a hostile power should once again
His senses fetter in some magic chain,
She on the knight a wondrous book bestow'd,
Which, fair to see, full many a secret show'd:
This for her sake he took—a faithful guide,
A guard against enchantments to provide.
Here, while his eyes the learned leaves peruse,
Each spelful mystery explain'd he views.
Another gift she brought of magic power
(A gift so rare was never seen before)
A sounding horn that scatters instant fear
With horrid noise in every trembling ear:
Such was the din, where'er its echoes spread,
The boldest knight, appall'd with terror, fled:
Not such the mingled roar, when winds resound,
When thunders roll, and earthquakes rock the
ground!

Rich

Rich in the fairy's gifts, th' intrepid duke
His last farewell with grateful feeling took : 40

He leaves the port, the quiet bay he leaves,
And in his poop the prosperous breeze receives.

And now along the spicy shore he flies,
Where India's rich and peopled towns arise ;

He sees a thousand isles on either hand 45

Dispers'd—and now he views Tomaso's land :

The golden soil of Chersonesus past,

He ploughs the billows of the watery waste ;

And views, as near he coasts the fertile shores,

Where Ganges to the sea his waters pours 50

With whitening foam—he Taprobana views,

And Coris next ; and now his course pursues

Where mariners th' advancing cliffs survey,

That form, with seas confin'd, a narrow bay.

At length the realm of Cochin he perceives, 55

And thence the furthest bound of India leaves.

While thus Astolpho cuts the briny tide,

Safe in the conduct of a skilful guide,

He Andronica asks, if e'er 'twas known

That regions, titled from the setting sun, 60

Had sent a venturous bark, with oars and sails,

To catch in eastern seas the driving gales ;

Or vessels thence their constant track might keep,
To France or Britain, thro' th' unfathom'd deep.

Then Andronica thus—The earth, embrac'd 65
With ocean's arms that circle round her waist,
On every part collected waters sees,
Where summers scorch them, or where winters freeze:
But since, where Æthiopia south extends,
Far tow'rd's the pole the savage land descends, 70
There are who say that Neptune's power withstood,
Here finds a barrier to th' indignant flood.
Hence from our clime no vessel courts the breeze,
To spread her daring sail on Europe's seas;
Nor pilot yet, from distant Europe, braves 75
The lengthen'd tides to stem our eastern waves.
Far in the west, when years their course have roll'd,
I see new Argonauts their sails unfold;
And many a Tiphys ocean's depths explore,
To open wondrous ways untry'd before. 80
Some coasting round the shelves of Afric, trace
Th' extended country of the sable race,
To pass the line whence blazing Phœbus burns,
And to your realms from Capricorn returns:
At length the Cape's extremest point they gain 85
That seems to part from ours the western main:

Each

Each clime they view, and search, with ceaseless toils,
The Persian, Indian, and Arabian isles,
Some pass the pillars rais'd on either strand,
The well-known labour of Alcides' hand; 90
And, like the circling sun, with sails unfurl'd,
Explore new lands in some remoter world.

While Andronica many a chief displays
Whose future deeds shall claim th' historic praise,
Her fair companion to the eastern gales 95
Now shifts, and now extends, the bending sails;
Now this, now that, she courts to speed their course,
And now decreases, now augments their force.
Few days were past, when to the gulph they came,
The gulph to which the Persian gives his name; 100
They seek the port, and resting on the sand
With poop to shore the painted vessels stand.
And now Astolpho from Alcina's power
Pursues his path in safety on the shore:
Where many a plain he travels, many a wood, 105
And many a desert vale and mountain rude.
There oft by day, and oft by midnight shade,
What murderous bands his lonely steps invade!
Lions and dragons fell his eyes survey,
With every beast that haunts the dreary way. 110

But when he to his lip the horn applies,
Each ruffian foe, each savage monster flies.

Arabia, nam'd the happy, now he gains,
Incense and myrrh perfume her grateful plains:

The virgin Phoenix there, in seats of rest, 115
Selects from all the world her balmy nest.

He saw where once, for Israel's chosen band,
Th' avenging waters, by divine command,

Proud Pharaoh with his numerous host o'erthrew: 120
At length he near the land of heroes drew.

By Trajan's banks he spurs, with winding course,
His steed, unmatch'd in swiftness as in force:

When o'er the field he leads the bounding race,
No eye his footstep in the dust can trace;

Soft snows and tender grass his hoofs sustain, 125
He sweeps unbath'd the billows of the main:

Argalia own'd him late—no mortal fire
He knew, conceiv'd of nimble wind and fire:

Not fill'd with earthly food, his purer frame 130
Was nurs'd with air, and Rabican his name.

Astolpho still his eager way pursu'd
To where the Nile receives the lesser flood.

But ere he reach'd the river's mouth, he spy'd
A bark that tow'rd him swiftly stemm'd the tide.

A bark that row'd him swiftly leeward of the
But ere he reach'd the river's mouth, he found
To where the Nile receives the lesser flood
Alpho thus his eager way purst
And mingled with air, and Rabi in his name
And with earthly food, his pure train
His body, wond'ring of terrible wind and fire
A ghastly gleam that—no mortal fire
The light, unshad of the billow of the main
A glow, and a light, his hoofs, his wings
To eye his footstep, and his car track
And o'er the field he knew the bounding mare
His foot, unmatched in swiftness, in tone
By the banks he sped, with wind and water
And he near the land of heroes drew
And P. with his numerous host of chivalry
The evening watch, by day's command
We were once, for that's the name
From all the world, a happy host
From Phoenicia there, in quest of rest
Laid out with perfume her track of bliss
And the happy day, now the year
Each day, another day
And the happy day, now the year





Stothard del.

Collyer sculp.

An aged hermit in the stern appear'd; 135

Adown his bosom wav'd his silver beard.

O! if thou prizest life, my son (he said)

Nor seek'st this day to mingle with the dead,

Speed to the further shore without delay,

For yonder path to death will lead thy way. 140

Scarce shalt thou pass a few short miles, before

Thine eyes shall view the dwelling red with gore:

In this his life a dreadful giant leads,

Whose height, by many a foot, the height exceeds

Of human race—no traveller or knight 145

Can ever thence escape by force or flight:

All cruelties his fiend-like arts contrive;

He slaughters some, and some devours alive.

To seize the wretch his glutton maw destroys,

With cruel sport he first a net employs 150

Of wondrous make, and near the cave with care

Hides in the yellow sands the fatal snare:

Then tow'rd the destin'd place, with dreadful cries,

He drives the stranger, who affrighted flies,

Till with loud laughter he beholds his net 155

With tangling meshes every limb beset.

No traveller he spares, nor knight, nor dame

Of high repute or undistinguish'd name:

He sucks the marrow and the blood he drains ;
He chews the flesh ; the bones bestrow the plains ; 160
And dire with human skins on every side
He hangs his dwelling round in horrid pride.

Good father, thanks ! and deem not I despise
Thy proffer'd love (the fearless knight replies) ;
With loss of honour safety might be won, 165
But more than death such safety must I shun.
Yet should Heaven's power so far my arms sustain,
That he should yield, and victor I remain,
Behold I make yon path secure for all ;
Slight harm may chance, but greater good befall : 170
My single life expos'd in balance weigh
Against the thousands I may save to-day,

Go then in peace, my son (the hermit cries)
Heaven send his angel Michael from the skies,
To guard thy person in the hour of fight ! 175
So spoke the simple sire, and bless'd the knight,
Who, as by Nilus' banks the steed he guides,
More in his horn than in his sword confides.

Between the rapid stream and fens there lay
Amid the sands a narrow, lonely way, 180
That soon the champion to the dwelling drew,
Whose ruthless host no tender pity knew.

Of wretches thither led, around were strung
Dissever'd heads, and naked limbs were hung;
And not a gate or window there but shew'd 185
Some horrid fragment dropping fable blood.

Before the cave Caligorant appears,
(Such is the name the dreadful giant bears)
He sees the duke at distance on the plain,
He sees, and scarcely can his joy contain; 190
For thrice the moon had chang'd, and not a knight
Had pass'd that way to glut his longing sight.

Now tow'rd's the fen with eager pace he speeds,
(The fen o'ergrown with sedge and spiky reeds)
In hope to drive the champion in the bands 195
That close were spread beneath the treacherous sands;
As oft before he many a wretch had caught,
Whom evil destiny had thither brought.

Soon as the Paladin the foe survey'd,
Awhile in deep suspense he cautious stay'd; 200
Left, as the hermit warn'd, his courser's feet
Should unawares th' entangling meshes meet.

But here his magic horn the warrior tries;
His magic horn its wonted aid supplies.
The giant hears, and struck with sudden fright 205
Reprints his backward steps; the Christian knight

Repeats

Repeats the blast: amaz'd in every sense
The giant flies, but knows not where nor whence;
Headlong he rushes on the toils, ensnar'd
In his own toils for others oft prepar'd: 210
The net extending drags him to the ground,
And clasps in twining links his body round.
Astolpho, who th' enormous bulk survey'd
Low stretch'd on earth, at once with naked blade
Leap'd from his steed, for many a thousand dead 215
To take due vengeance on the murderer's head.
But now, he fears, to kill his wretched thrall,
Mankind would baseness more than courage call,
While on the plain all motionless he lies
Fast fetter'd with indissoluble ties. 220

This net of steel with more than mortal art
Had Vulcan fram'd, to break whose smallest part
No strength avail'd: with this of old were bound
Venus and Mars in Love's embraces found.
The jealous God contriv'd the subtle toils, 225
To entrap the God of arms and Queen of smiles.
Hermes from Vulcan this by stealth remov'd,
To seize fair Chloris, long his best lov'd;
Chloris, of bright Aurora's train, who flies
Before the sun, and round the dappled skies 230

From her full vest the silver lily strows,
The purple violet, and blushing rose.

Her closely Hermes watch'd, till with the snare

One day he caught the flying nymph in air.

Then was it known for ages to remain 235

Within Canopus at Anubis' fane.

Three thousand years elaps'd, at last arose

Caligorant, the worst of impious foes,

Who seiz'd with daring hand the net divine,

And fir'd the town, and robb'd the holy shrine. 240

From this Astolpho takes a length to bind

The caitiff's arms; these pinion'd close behind,

His fierceness tam'd, submissive now he stands,

Mild as some damsel, to the knight's commands,

Who thinks to lead him thence, in triumph shown 245

Thro' many a city, fort, and peopled town;

With him resolv'd the wondrous net to take,

Whose like no mortal tool or hand could make.

Then on his captive's back he lays the weight,

And leads behind him in victorious state 250

The wretch, consigning to his servile care

The ponderous helm and massy shield to bear;

And welcome joy imparts where'er he goes,

Since fear no more the pilgrim's bosom knows.

Thus

Thus pass'd Astolpho, till he near espies 255
The well-known pyramids of Memphis rise;
Memphis, that draws her greatest fame from these;
Now crowded Cairo he before him sees.
The people flock to view with eager eye
The giant's towering height and wondering cry: 260
Whence could yon pigmy knight such prowess show,
To bind in captive chains so huge a foe?
While each beholds him with enraptur'd gaze,
And gives him every palm of knightly praise.

Where Nile his stream to Damiata guides, 265
And where he rushes in the briny tides,
Astolpho pass'd, yet none (so went the fame)
Escap'd alive or free that thither came.
There on the shore, and near the mouth of Nile,
Lodg'd in a tower, a robber liv'd by spoil 270
Of travellers and pilgrims thither led,
And even to Cairo's gates his rapine spread;
For though his limbs a thousand wounds receive,
Not one the caitiff could of life bereave,
To prove if aught avail'd in bloody strife 275
To make the Sisters cut his thread of life,
Astolpho now to Damiata came,
And fought the wretch—Orilo was his name,

Arriving

Arriving where the sea receives the Nile,
He sees the castle on the sandy soil, 280
Where dwelt th' enchanted soul, no son of earth,
Who from an imp and fairy drew his birth.
Already there the fight with dreadful rage
He sees two warriors with Orilo wage.
Alone Orilo stood; but such his might, 285
That scarce their skill preserv'd each noble knight.
These youths their birth from Olivero take,
Gryphon the white, and Aquilant the black.

When first the field the necromancer fought,
With great advantage on his side he fought: 290
With him a monster came, to whom the earth
Of Egypt gives its unpropitious birth:
He basks on shore, or lives beneath the flood,
And human bodies are his dreadful food,
When thoughtless pilgrims by his rage are slain, 295
Or wretched mariners that plough the main.

The breathless monster, stretch'd along the sand,
A victim lies to each brave brother's hand:
Orilo's limbs they lop, but lop in vain;
Nor, though dismember'd, can he yet be slain. 300
Depriv'd of hand or leg, his magic power
Returns it to the place it held before,

Now

Now Gryphon to the teeth drives through his crest;
Now Aquilant divides him to the breast;
He laughs at all their blows in fell disdain; 305
They rave to find their blows bestow'd in vain.
So when we see the liquid metal fall,
Which chemists by the name of Hermes call,
Though here and there the parts dissever'd roll,
They soon again unite to form the whole. 310
His head lopt off, Orilo swift descends,
And eager in its search his arm extends;
Now by the nose he takes it, now the hairs,
And, fixing on the neck, the loss repairs.
Then vainly in the stream that near them flows 315
Brave Gryphon's hand the sever'd visage throws:
Orilo dives the bottom to explore,
And with his head returns unhurt to shore.

Two lovely dames, in comely garments dress'd,
This clad in white, and that in sable vest, 320
Who first to battle urg'd each gallant knight,
Stood near beside to view th' unequal fight.
These were the fairies, whose benignant care
Had bred from earliest years the noble pair.

Now from these climes withdraws the golden day, 325
The happy isles receive the parting ray:

Pale

Pale in the shade the misty objects gleam,
And the moon glimmers with a doubtful beam;
When fierce Orilo to his fort retir'd;
For now the white and fable dame requir'd 330

To stay the combat, till the roseate morn
In eastern skies should make her wish'd return.

Astolpho now, to whom before were known,
By each device, but more their valour shown,
Gryphon and Aquilant, with eager pace 335

Advanc'd, and held them in a strict embrace.

Not less the brethren, when in him who drew

The giant chain'd, the English duke they knew,

With joy carefs'd him, who to Gallia came

Known by the baron of the leopard's name. 340

The virgins led the warriors to repose,

Where near in view a stately palace rose;

Whence squires and damsels met them on the way,

With many a torch that cast a blazing ray.

Their coursers to th' attending grooms consign'd, 345

The knights unarm, and in a garden find,

Plac'd by a crystal fountain's murmuring tide,

A plenteous board with various cates supply'd.

The costly wines that crown the sumptuous board,

With savoury viands, less delight afford 350

Than

Than the sweet converse of the social hour;
But chief Orilo and his magic power
Engross the talk; while still to every mind
It seems a dream, that head or arm disjoin'd,
And cast to earth, should thus again unite, 355
And he return more daring to the fight.

Already good Astolpho counsel took;
And soon he gathers from his wondrous book,
No mortal hands Orilo's life can end,
Till from his head one fatal hair they rend. 360
Not less Astolpho conquest now enjoys,
Than if his arms had won the glorious prize;
And soon to each he makes his purpose known,
To take th' adventure on himself alone,
These, well assur'd his courage vain to find, 365
Freely to him the arduous task resign'd.

Aurora through the skies her light extends,
When the fierce robber from his fort descends.
Astolpho and Orilo rush to fight;
One wields the mace, and one the falchion bright. 370
Astolpho long essays some well-aim'd blow,
To chace the groaning spirit from his foe.
Him in a hundred parts Astolpho hews;
As oft his sever'd frame itself renews.

Amidst

Amidst a thousand strokes, one happier sped 375

At length above the shoulders reach'd his head;

The head and helmet from the trunk it rends:

Sudden Astolpho from his seat descends:

Now in the matted locks with eager speed

His hand he fastens, and remounts his steed; 380

Against the course of Nile he spurs, he flies,

And far from sad Orilo bears the prize.

Meantime the wizzard hastens to explore

(Unconscious what had past) the sandy shore:

But when he finds the knight and courser fled, 385

Had to the distant forest borne his head;

He takes his steed, and on the saddle light

He leaps, and hastens to pursue the knight.

He would have cry'd to bid the warrior stay,

But the fierce champion bore his tongue away. 390

He spurs, he gives the rein, but like the wind

Fierce Rabicano leaves him far behind.

And now Astolpho for the fatal hair

Explor'd the head with unavailing care;

At length—Let all be shorn (the warrior cries) 395

And well his sword the place of shears supplies.

The head his left, the sword his right hand bears,

With this he shaves around th' innum'rous hairs.

Among the rest the fatal hair he shears :
Ghastly and pale at once the face appears ; 400
The eyes roll inward, every symptom shows
That life at last has touch'd its wretched close :
The headless trunk that follow'd, sudden lies
Fall'n from its seat, no more again to rise.

Astolpho now the dames and warriors fought ; 405
In his victorious grasp the head he brought,
With all the signs of late-departed breath ;
And show'd afar the carcase stretch'd in death.

Th' adventure finish'd thus, Astolpho warms
The brother-knights to noble deeds of arms 410
In aid of Charles—yet little each requires
To fan the ardor that his breast inspires.
But ere the warriors bent to France their way,
They turn'd aside their pious rites to pay
In fainted regions, with the presence blest 415
Of God himself, in human flesh confess'd.

Soon as they reach'd the mountain's arduous height,
Lo ! sudden stretch'd before their raptur'd sight,
That holy land, where never-ending Grace
Cleans'd with his blood the sins of human race. 420

When now the warriors near the city drew,
They met a noble youth, whom well they knew,

Of

Of Mecca, Sanfonetto was his name,
His virtues great, and great his knightly fame:
In early prime of life, above his years 425
For prudence fam'd, and reverenc'd by his peers.

From him such welcome every knight receives,
As the free soul to worth congenial gives.
He leads them to the gates with courteous grace,
And in his court assigns an honour'd place. 430
Those parts he rul'd; and there vicegerent made
By royal Charles, the empire justly sway'd.
To him Aftolpho gave his conquer'd prize,
That captive giant of so huge a size,
With whose strong nerves enormous weights to bear,
Ten beasts of burthen scarcely could compare. 436
With him, Aftolpho on the knight bestow'd
The wondrous net to which he conquest ow'd.
From Sanfonetto then the duke receiv'd
A costly belt with rich embroidery weav'd; 440
And two fair spurs, resplendent to behold,
Gold were the buckles, and the rowels gold;
Believ'd the champion's once, whose valiant deed
The holy virgin from the dragon freed:
With many a prize as rare were these obtain'd 445
By Sanfonetto, when he Zaffa gain'd.

While these, with rites of pure devotion, pour'd
 Their souls in prayer, and Heaven's high grace im-
 plor'd,

A Grecian pilgrim came, who tidings brought
 That deep distress in Gryphon's bosom wrought, 450
 Abforb'd each calmer thought in black despair,
 And scatter'd all his pious vows in air.

Much lov'd the knight, yet lov'd but to his shame,
 A damsel, Origilla was her name ;

With her but few could vie in charms of face, 455

And few like her of mind depriv'd and base,

Late, in the walls of Constantine, behind

He left the fair, by sharp disease confin'd—

A fever's rage—and when return'd again

He hop'd to find her from her bed of pain 460

In charms restor'd, he heard the faithless dame

In Antioch's city led a life of shame,

With some new object of her worthless flame. }

From this sad moment Gryphon knows not rest ;

By day, by night, sighs issue from his breast. 465

His brother Aquilant had oft reprov'd

His senseless passion, oft, with pity mov'd,

Strove from his heart to drive a worthless dame,

Who liv'd the scandal of the female name,

Yet,

Yet, spite of truth, would Gryphon fain abuse 470
Himself unhappy, and her faults excuse.

At length he purpos'd to depart, unknown
Of Aquilant, and haste to Antioch's town;
And thence recover to his longing arms
The fair who first enslav'd him with her charms; 475
To drag his rival forth, and make him prove
His dreadful vengeance for insulted love.

Six days elaps'd, Damascus strikes his eyes,
And thence his course to Antioch's city lies;
When near Damascus' walls the knight he met, 480
On whom his faithless dame had newly set
Her changeful heart, and well the pair agreed,
As with the fetid flower the noisome weed.
Thus, fair to view, the base deceiver rode,
And, arm'd in pomp, a stately steed bestrode, 485
With Origilla, richly to behold
Array'd in azure garments fring'd with gold.
Two squires beside him pac'd along the field,
Who bore by turns his helmet and his shield.

Soon as the dame beheld her injur'd knight, 490
Brave Gryphon, near, she trembled with affright:
Now with her partner she concerts the guile,
Then hastes to Gryphon with a treacherous smile;

In well-dissembled joy her arms she throws
Around his neck, and to his bosom grows ; 495
With honey'd words, with every soothing art
Of dalliance fond, she melts his easy heart.

Then weeping thus—Is this, my long-lost lord,
Is this, alas ! my constant love's reward ?
Twelve tedious months neglected and alone, 500
Gryphon nor hears my sighs, nor heeds my moan.
When with impatience from Nicosia's court
(Where many a knight and damsel made resort)
I hop'd thy swift return to me, bereft
Of every joy, by thee in sickness left ; 505
I heard my Gryphon (all his vows forgot)
Had Syria reach'd—How cruel then my lot !
Hopeless to follow—desperate thoughts suggest
With my own hand to pierce my wretched breast.
But favouring Fortune's better care supply'd 510
That succour, which thy cold neglect deny'd :
She in my brother sent a valued friend,
From all mischance my honour to defend ;
And now a bliss, o'er every blessing dear,
Gives me to meet my lord, my Gryphon here : 515
Sure, but for this, my soul had wing'd her flight
In fond impatience for thy much-lov'd sight.

So spoke the damsel, fraudulent of mind,
Mistress of art, and basest of her kind:
So well she knew her feign'd complaints to frame, 520
That all on Gryphon she transferr'd the blame:
Enough, that from himself he can remove
The heavy charge of her neglected love.

Th' impostor greeting fair, with him he steer'd
His friendly way, and, as they journey'd, heard 525
That Syria's wealthy king proclaim'd a court
For splendid jousts, where knights of every sort,
Of Christian faith, or bred in Pagan laws,
Whom rumour to the festive meeting draws,
Without the walls, or in the town, secure 530
Remain unquestion'd, while the sports endure.

Of wealthy cities on the eastern coast
Her numerous sons may proud Damascus boast:
On fruitful plains it stands, in wholesome air,
Alike in winter as in summer fair: 535
Against the town a mountain's neighbouring height
Reflects the first faint blush of dawning light:
Two crystal rivers through the city glide,
And branching in a thousand rills divide,
That each its tribute to a garden pours, 540
To nourish odoriferous plants and flowers.

O'er all the midmost street resplendent lie
Rich vests and tapestry of various dye.
Herbs of all hues and scents their smell dispense,
Whence soft perfumes delight the gentle sense. 545
Each gate, each window, charms the stranger's sight,
With costly stuffs reflecting mingled light;
But chief, with many a fair and stately dame,
Whose garments gay with gold and jewels flame.
Here sprightly youths in tuneful measures lead 550
The various dance, there mount the manag'd steed.
Whate'er in India or Maremma shines,
(Their pearly stores, or treasure of their mines)
Damascus in refulgent pomp displays,
While lords, and knights, and squires with wonder
gaze. 555

As Gryphon and his train their way pursue,
Devouring all they saw with greedy view;
A knight accosts, and courteous from their steeds
The train invites, and to his dwelling leads;
There with refreshing baths their toil relieves, 560
And at his board, with welcome smiles, receives.
He tells them how the mighty king who held
The Syrian rule, and in Damascus dwell'd,

Next

Next day by trumpets would the jousts proclaim, 564

Where native knights or knights of foreign name

Might show their skill and right to knightly fame. }

Though Gryphon came not thither with intent

Of tilts or combat, his high courage, bent

On noble deeds, accepts the proffer'd field,

Nor shuns the palm that Fortune seems to yield. 570

He asks what cause the festival ordain'd;

If every year in solemn rite maintain'd,

Or by the king now first decreed, to try

How far his knights in deeds of arms may vie.

To whom the host—This morn's returning light 575

Renews the annual pomp of mimic fight,

In dear memorial of the day that led

The fair Lucina to our monarch's bed;

Lucina, heir to Cyprus' wide domain,

Whom in her father's court now adverse winds detain.

Then rising from the board to seek repose, 581

Their courteous host the downy couch bestows:

They sink to rest, till with the morn they wake,

When cheerful shouts their quiet slumbers break.

Timbrels and trumpets rouse to festive arms, 585

With eager crowds the wide piazza swarms;

The

The mingled sounds of cars and courfers rise,
 And the streets echo with redoubled cries.
 Brave Gryphon o'er his limbs bright armour wears,
 (Such armour scarce another champion bears) 590

Which with her fairy hand the white-rob'd maid
 Temper'd impassive to the hostile blade.

With him, the seeming candidate for fame,
 The stain of manhood, who from Antioch came,
 Arms for the list: their careful host supplies 595
 Large store of spears the tilting to suffice.

Himself attends, and many a squire he leads;
 Some march on foot, some rein the prancing steeds.

Now Gryphon found the manly jousts begun,
 Spears broke, and falchions flashing in the sun: 600
 When at the list arriv'd, apart they stand,
 Awhile spectators of the martial band.

With heedful gaze they mark each hardy feat,
 Where two, or four, or six in jousting meet.

One to his dame with quaint devices shows 605
 Such colours as his grief or joy disclose:

One by his crest, or painted shield, declares
 If love rejects his suit, or crowns his cares.

Soft blooming damsels on the champions shower
 From roofs and windows every vernal flower: 610

Each

Each knightly rival to the trumpet's sound
His courser spurs with many a spritely bound:
All prove their best—some merit gifts and praise,
And some loud peals of scorn and laughter raise.

A suit of armour, doom'd the victor's prize, 615
For that day's jousts the Syrian king supplies,
Who late receiv'd it at a merchant's hand,
A merchant journeying from Armenia's land:
To this the monarch adds a scarf, emboss'd
With numerous pearls, and gems of rarest cost. 620

Eight youthful knights by Norandino held
Near to his person, who in arms excell'd,
In friendly league 'gainst all opponents stood,
Noble themselves, and sprung of noble blood:
These in the martial square that day had run 625
With all the list'd warriors, one by one:
With lance, with sword, or mace they wag'd the fight,
While the king view'd, and view'd them with delight.
Off through the cuirass, in th' unpleasant strife,
The weapon pass'd, endangering either's life: 630
Like foes they fought, but that the king could stay
At will their rage, and bid surcease the fray.

Now he of Antioch, who with Gryphon came,
(Martano was the coward's hateful name)

Stept

Stept in and with his looks the combat dar'd, 635
As if with Gryphon he in valour shar'd;
Then stood awhile beside, and earnest view'd
A dreadful fight that 'twixt two knights ensu'd.
Seleucia's lord, among the youthful train
Who came the general challenge to maintain, 640
In single conflict with Ombruno strove:
At length his falchion through his face he drove
And reach'd his life: all mourn'd him as he fell,
Whose fame in arms could many a knight excel:
Nor could, thro' all the realm, a name be found 645
For courtesy and goodness more renown'd.
This seen, Martano trembled with affright,
Left equal fortune on himself should light:
Nature prevailing, how he thence may fly
He meditates, but him with heedful eye 650
Brave Gryphon marks, and urging onward drives
Against a knight that in the list arrives.
Thus, when th' exerting voice of village-swains
A mungrel cur against the wolf constrains,
By turns he stops, and barking views his foe, 655
Whose teeth with anger gnash, whose eyes with fury
glow.

Where princes fate the deeds of arms to see,
With ladies, knights, and lords of high degree,

Martano

Martano fearing in the list to run,
His courser turn'd aside the shock to shun. 660
Yet those who friendly wish'd to veil his shame
Might to his erring steed ascribe the blame :
But with his falchion next so ill he fought,
Demosthenes himself in vain had fought
To plead his cause: so much each stroke he fear'd, 665
His arms of brittle frame not forg'd of steel appear'd.
At length he fled, disturbing in his flight
The martial ranks : behind the recreant knight,
From scornful crowds loud peals of laughter rise,
Shouts, clamours, hisses, mingling in the skies. 670
Thus, like th' insidious wolf by shepherds chac'd,
Martano from the list retires disgrac'd ;
While Gryphon stays, but thinks his better name
Defil'd, dishonour'd by his fellow's shame :
Rage swell'd his heart, his face with crimson glow'd,
As his the guilt : meanwhile from him the crowd 676
Like deeds expect, and to the knight foretel
The same disgrace that on his comrade fell.
Behoves him now to strain each nerve, and raise
His wonted worth to shine with brighter blaze : 680
Each slip to those whose minds prejudge the cause,
Each venial fault the heaviest censure draws.

Now

Now Gryphon on his thigh the spear address'd,
 (Who seldom held in vain his spear in rest)
 And to the charge his foaming courser press'd. 685
 The baron of Sidonia chanc'd to meet
 The dreadful shock, which hurl'd him from his seat;
 All gaze with wonder who his fall behold,
 Far other chance than what they late foretold.
 Again his spear unbroken Gryphon held, 690
 And full on Lodicea's lord impell'd:
 The weapon shiver'd on the bossy shield:
 The champion, near extended on the field,
 Fell backward on his steed; but soon anew
 Recovering, with his sword at Gryphon flew. 695
 Around his temples Gryphon whirls the steel:
 He seem'd from Heaven the thundering force to feel.
 Stroke following stroke was dealt with sweepy sway,
 Till senseless on the ground the warrior lay.
 Two brethren, Thyrsis and Corymbus nam'd, 700
 Long o'er the rest for skill in tilting fam'd,
 Their former skill forgot, now press'd the sand
 Beneath the son of Olivero's hand:
 This, from his steed the spear's first onset threw,
 And that, the falchion from his saddle drew; 705
 While with united voice the lists declare,
 The stranger's arm that day the prize would bear.

Among the rest that to the tilting came,
Was Salenterno of redoubted name,
Who o'er the realm with rule despotic reign'd, 710
And first in joust the gallant strife maintain'd.
He, fir'd to anger that a stranger's might
Should win the palm from every Syrian knight,
A lance arresting, loud to Gryphon cries,
And, proudly threatening, to the course defies. 715
Brave Gryphon answers with his spear in rest,
(A spear from ten selected for the best);
Full on the shield the well-aim'd point arrives,
Thro' shield, thro' cuirass, and thro' bosom drives;
And passing on, its cruel passage tears, 720
And at his back a palm behind appears.
All, save the king, with joy beheld his fate,
For all th' oppressive Salenterno hate.

Two of Damascus next his prowess own,
Carmondo and Ermophilus o'erthrown: 725
One o'er the monarch's martial host presides;
And one, high-admiral, his navy guides.
This at the onset from his seat behold
Cast headlong; that, beneath his courser roll'd,
Lies overwhelm'd, nor could his courser stand 730
Against the shock of Gryphon's powerful hand.

Seleucia's

Seleucia's lord, who still his place maintain'd,
The bravest champion of the eight remain'd :
Now, rushing furious, each his spear oppos'd
To where against the fight the vizor clos'd ; 735
But Gryphon with such force the Pagan shook,
His left foot straight the stirrup's hold forsook.
Their broken lances now aside they threw,
And, wheeling round, their beaming falchions drew.
From Gryphon first a stroke the Pagan feels 740
That from his thundering arm the Christian deals ;
Sheer thro' the shield's tough plate and bone it goes,
Which from a thousand shields the warrior chose :
His thigh had next receiv'd the biting blade,
But double folds of steel the fury stay'd. 745
Seleucia's lord at Gryphon's vizor drove
The weapon's edge, which falling from above
Had pierc'd through all, but that the warrior's arms
By potent spell secur'd each limb from harms ;
While happier Gryphon, at each furious stroke, 750
Cleft the tough mail and jointed armour broke.
All present now Seleucia's lord beheld
By noble Gryphon in the field excell'd ;
And had not Norandino stay'd the fight,
That day had sunk him to eternal night. 755
All

All view'd with joy the dreadful conflict cease,
 And prais'd their gracious king who gave the peace;
 Those gallant eight, who challeng'd all the list,
 Too weak a single warrior to resist,
 Were vanquish'd one by one; the rest who came 760
 To meet the challenge found their hope of fame
 Thro' Gryphon lost, who thus unmatch'd had run,
 And from the eight an easy conquest won.

Meantime brave Gryphon to his home returns,
 While indignation in his bosom burns, 765
 Still more depress'd with vile Martano's shame,
 Than joyful at his own well-purchas'd fame.
 Martano every art industrious tries
 His shame to palliate with unmanly lyes;
 While the foul partner of his guilt and wile 770
 Each falsehood seconds, adding guile to guile.
 Howe'er the youthful knight their tales believ'd,
 He heard in silence, and th' excuse receiv'd;
 But deem'd it best to part in secret thence,
 Lest, seen again, Martano should incense 775
 The people's rage—Thus by a private way
 They reach'd the gate thro' which their journey lay.
 The nearest dwelling wearied Gryphon sought:
 Two miles the warrior to a dwelling brought:

His helm he loos'd, his limbs from armour freed, 780

And from the reins and bit releas'd his steed;

Then, in a room retir'd, the door he clos'd,

And on the couch in slumber deep repos'd.

Now Origilla and Martano, bent

On foulest treason, to the garden went; 785

And there a scheme of deeper guile design'd

Than craft e'er whisper'd to the basest mind.

Martano means to seize the arms and vest

By Gryphon worn, the steed which late he press'd,

And thus before the king, in borrow'd spoils, 790

Usurp the honour of another's toils.

Soon as resolv'd, he takes the warrior's weed,

The dazzling armour, and the milk-white steed:

He grasps his buckler, and his crest he rears,

And a new Gryphon to the fight appears. 795

Then with the dame and squires he turn'd to where

The busy throng still fill'd the public square,

And came what time the martial rivals ceas'd

To wield the sword and place the lance in rest.

The monarch gives command to seek the knight 800

Whose lofty crest was deck'd with plumage white;

His courser white, and white the vest he wore,

Though yet unknown the name the warrior bore.

He,

He, who from looks assum'd, deriv'd his pride,
Like the vile ass beneath the lion's hide, 805
The summons heard, and with unblushing face
To Norandino went in Gryphon's place.
Soon as the king the seeming knight espy'd,
He rose, embrac'd, and plac'd him at his side;
He bids the heralds to the lists around 810
Him glorious victor of the day resound:
With trumpets sprightly notes, in loud acclaim
Wide spreads from tongue to tongue his worthless
name;

And when the monarch to his palace rode,
He kept him near, and every honour show'd. 815
He gave him fair and stately rooms prepar'd
Within the court, where Origilla shar'd
An equal grace, on whom in royal state
A train of noble knights and damsels wait.

Still Gryphon lock'd in thoughtless slumber lay, 820
Nor wak'd till low declin'd the light of day.
His sleep dispell'd, and blushing thus to waste
The fleeting hours, he quits his bed in haste,
And seeks (as yet unknowing of his shame)
The lying kinsman and deceitful dame, 825
Whom late he left, with all th' attendant train:
When these he finds no more, and seeks in vain

His arms and vesture, new suspicions rise,
Increasing when his comrade's arms he spies.

By slow degrees, to Gryphon now reveal'd, 830
That truth appear'd which love had long conceal'd;
Soon, to his grief, he found a brother's name
But veil'd the partner of her lawless flame:

What should he do? Impell'd by present need,
He takes the base Martano's arms and steed: 835

But better had he gone unarm'd, than wear
The cuirass such a breast was wont to bear;
That hateful buckler on his arm embrace,
And on his head that shameful helmet place.

Yet eager to pursue th' adulterous pair 840

His soul was lost to every other care:

The city now he reach'd, what time the day

Departing, Phoebus shone with evening ray.

Built near the gate to which the champion drew,
A fair and stately castle rose to view; 845

The king, assembling here a courtly band,

Lords, dames, and knights, the first of Syria's land,

Above the walls a splendid feast prepar'd,

And with his guests the social banquet shar'd;

Whence, from afar, beneath their wide survey, 850

The distant fields and open country lay.

As

As tow'rd's the gate advancing Gryphon came,
 Clad in the vestments of opprobrious shame;
 Ill chance for him! the king and festive train
 Beheld him pacing o'er the verdant plain. 855
 Esteem'd the same he look'd by outward port,
 He mov'd the dames and knights to scornful sport,
 Where next the king, amid the nobles plac'd,
 Martano fate with highest favour grac'd;
 And near, the worthy partner of his guile: 860
 Of these the king enquir'd, with gracious smile,
 What wretch was that who lately to his cost
 Essay'd the jousts; who, every honour lost,
 Could thus return—'Tis wondrous strange (he cry'd)
 That you, a knight so brave, in combat try'd, 865
 Should join with one, to knighthood such disgrace,
 That all our east scarce knows a name so base;
 Unless you seek perchance t' exalt your praise,
 And with his deeds compar'd your glory raise.
 But, by yon Heaven, and all its powers, I swear, 870
 Did not your worth my warmest friendship share,
 Such public penance should the dastard find,
 Such as my hatred to his coward kind
 Might tell to all—and if he 'scape the shame,
 He owes his thanks to you with whom he came. 875

Then he, the sink of every vice, reply'd :
Great king ! the man whose acts his mien bely'd,
Near Antioch's town but late (nor can I tell
His name or birth) with me in converse fell :
I deem'd him worthy, by his martial air, 880
With me the trial of the lists to share,
But ne'er beheld him in the field display
His craven arms till that disgraceful day ;
Yet let not those short hours with me he pass'd
O'er his demerits now oblivion cast, 885
Since, from that time recall'd, methinks I find,
And ever shall, disgrace oppress my mind,
If, to their shame who bear the name of knight,
He goes dismiss'd unquestion'd from your sight.
Far rather let me view, with well-pleas'd eye, 890
The wretch suspended quivering in the sky :
A sentence which may future warning give
To all such dastards that unpunish'd live.

Martano thus ; when Origilla took
The word, to second what her minion spoke. 895

To whom the king—Not so his deeds I view,
To think that death for such a crime is due :
But we, in judgment for his great offence,
Will to the crowd another feast dispense.

He

He said; and to a baron gave in charge 900
His royal will: instructed now at large,
The baron, with a trusty guard, descends,
And silent near the city walls attends
In secret ambush, Gryphon there to wait:
Him, 'twixt two bridges, entering at the gate, 905
He seizes unawares, and bound in chains,
Clos'd in a gloomy cell till morn detains.

The golden sun above the watery bed
Of hoary Tethys rais'd his beamy head,
When vile Martano, fearing Gryphon bold, 910
Might to the king at length the truth unfold,
And on himself revenge the treason, took
A hasty farewell, and the town forsook.

Now near the throng'd piazza Gryphon came,
By guards conducted to the place of shame: 915
They stript him of his arms and plumed crest,
And left dishonour'd in an humble vest;
Then led him thus amidst the shouting train,
High plac'd to view upon a rolling wain,
Which with slow step two lagging oxen drew, 920
By hunger lean and of ill-favour'd hue,
Around th' ignoble car a mingled throng,
Dotards and shameless women, pour'd along:

Now this, now that, supply'd the driver's place,
And all with vulgar rage the knight disgrace. 925
Those arms, to which his evil chance he ow'd,
Those arms, whose make misled th' ill-judging crowd,
Trail'd at the car behind, along the ground
In fordid filth their rightful penance found.
The wheels now stay'd before the judgment seat, 930
And there he heard the herald's voice repeat
Another's deeds, and with Martano's shame
By trumpet's sound his own great deeds defame.
Thus through the streets, to all a public fight,
By houses, temples, shops, they led the knight, 935
Where not a name, that insult e'er apply'd,
Was then forgot; at length the car they guide
Without the walls, and thence in foul disgrace
They mean with blows to drive him from the place:
But scarce they from his feet the gyves unbound, 940
And loos'd the chains that clasp'd his arms around,
When, lo! he drew the sword and seiz'd the shield
That late were useless dragg'd along the field:
Now here, now there, he whirls the mortal steel,
And thirty near the car his fury feel; 945
Swift fly the rest, as terror bids them stray,
One seeks the field, and one the beaten way,

Of those who first dispersing o'er the plain,
With nimble feet the city walls can gain,
Impetuous some, as sense of danger sways, 950
Forgetful of their friends, the drawbridge raise,
While wide in every distant quarter rise
The shouting clamours and distressful cries.
Fierce Gryphon, as aloft the bridge they drew,
(Ill chance for them) two luckless wretches flew: 955
Another, dash'd against the stony plain,
Pour'd from his batter'd skull the smoking brain:
One wounded in the breast fell headlong down,
As up the walls he climb'd to reach the town:
The trembling crowds, with terror chill'd, behold 960
The breathless carcase from the ramparts roll'd.
Great is the fear that many a mind appalls,
Lest furious Gryphon should o'erleap the walls.
Not deeper tumults could around prevail,
Should the stern Soldan with his host assail 965
Damascus' gates—arms flash, loud shouts ascend,
On every side the thronging people bend:
Timbrels and trumpets mingled pour around
The deafening noise, and to the skies resound.
King Norandino, whom the din alarms, 970
The city leaves with all his court in arms:

A thousand

A thousand men his faithful guard supply,
And round he sees the timorous people fly.
Meantime, the vulgar crowd dispers'd and fled,
Those luckless arms, that late his shame had bred, 975
(Such arms as fortune then vouchsaf'd to lend)
Brave Gryphon seiz'd his person to defend;
And near a temple, with strong walls immur'd,
Whose scite a deep enclosing fosse secur'd,
Upon a narrow bridge his station chose, 980
To guard him safely from surrounding foes.
Behold where from the portal near him drew,
With many a shout and threat, the martial crew.
Yet Gryphon still, unmov'd, his place maintain'd,
As if his fearless soul their force disdain'd: 985
Onward he sprung: he grasp'd his glittering blade,
And many a gasping warrior breathless laid;
Then, to the bridge again retreating, lay
Safe from attack, and held his foes at bay.
But more and more the troops uniting swarm, 990
The deepening battle wears a direr form,
When Gryphon pausing views with anxious eyes
The hostile files that all around him rise:
Fast from his wounded thigh and shoulder trail'd
The purple stream; his breath and vigour fail'd; 995
But

But Virtue, watchful o'er her sons, inclin'd
To peace and pardon Norandino's mind:
While from the walls he led his martial train,
He view'd around the ghastly heaps of slain;
The gaping wounds, that seem'd by Hector given, 1000
With cruel steel through temper'd armour driven,
And saw how far his late decree had wrong'd
A knight to whom all worth and praise belong'd.

When near him now the gallant youth he view'd
(Whose single arm such numbers had subdu'd, 1005
That dy'd the watery fosse to fearful red,
Entrench'd behind a ghastly pile of dead)
Heart-struck with grief and shame, he bade to cease
The cruel strife, and to confirm the peace
From further fight recall'd each willing band, 1010
And stretch'd, in friendly sign, his naked hand.

Then thus to Gryphon—How shall I proclaim
My sense of sorrow and repenting shame?
Another's crime, with deep-concerted guile,
Has led my erring judgment in the toil: 1015
If late repentance can amends dispense,
To heal the folly of my past offence,
Behold me ready to repair the blame
That lately sullied your illustrious name:

Ask

Ask what thou wilt to crown thy high desert, 1020
 Gold, cities, lands—my kingdom's better part,
 With these the tribute of a faithful heart.

He said, and ceasing, from his steed descends,
 And to the knight his better hand extends.
 Gryphon, who sees the king with eager pace 1025
 Advance to meet him in a friend's embrace,
 At once his anger and his sword resigns,
 And low at Norandino's feet inclines
 To clasp his knees: the king beholds him bleed
 With recent wounds, and summons at his need 1030
 A skilful leech, then bids with gentlest care
 The wounded warrior to his palace bear.

END OF THE EIGHTH BOOK.

Aguliant leaves Jerusalem to go in search of his brother;
he meets Marquis and Ophelia, takes and carries them
to Damascus. Noradino initiates another tournament in
honour of Gryphon.

THE

NINTH BOOK

OF

ORLANDO.

Marquis of Damascus. Confusion on account of a lady's
amour offered by the king at the prize of the victor, and
claimed by Marquis, Aguliant, and Sancho. The
engaged of the tournament. Aguliant
unhitherto. At last the four knights are made known to
each other, and peace is restored. Aguliant, Sancho,
Gryphon, Aguliant, and Marquis depart for France. The
embarc on board a ship, and are overtaken by a dreadful
storm. They are cast on the land of the Amazons. The
strange law there instituted. Battle between Marquis and the
Amazons. The Amazons. The champion con-
tinue they are parted by the night. The champion con-
Marquis and the knights in his palace. All attempt to
make their escape from the country by force, but are nearly
overpowered by numbers when Aguliant, blowing his horn,
drives the Amazons before him. Sancho, (who
Gryphon, Aguliant, and Marquis, being terrified with the
first embark and leave Aguliant behind. The knights and
Marquis afterwards landing, Marquis parts from his com-
panions. Her meeting with Ophelia and Isabello.

THE ARGUMENT.

AQUILANT leaves Jerusalem to go in search of his brother ; he meets Martano and Origilla ; seizes and carries them to Damascus. Norandino institutes another tournament in honour of Gryphon. Arrival of Sansonetto, Aftolpho, and Marphisa at Damascus. Confusion on account of a suit of armour offered by the king as the prize of the victor, and claimed by Marphisa. Marphisa, Aftolpho, and Sansonetto engage the troops of Damascus. Gryphon and Aquilant unhorsed. At last the four knights are made known to each other, and peace is restored. Aftolpho, Sansonetto, Gryphon, Aquilant, and Marphisa depart for France. They embark on board a ship, and are overtaken by a dreadful storm. They are cast on the land of the Amazons. The strange law there instituted. Battle between Marphisa and nine of the champions of the Amazons : she engages the tenth till they are parted by the night. This champion entertains Marphisa and the knights in his palace. All attempt to make their escape from the country by force, but are nearly overpowered by numbers, when Aftolpho, blowing his horn, drives the Amazons before him. Sansonetto, Guido, Gryphon, Aquilant, and Marphisa, being terrified with the rest, embark and leave Aftolpho behind. The knights and Marphisa afterwards landing, Marphisa parts from her companions. Her meeting with Sabrina and Pinabello.



THE
NINTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.

MEANTIME in Judah's walls with anxious
thought

Good Aquilant his absent brother sought;
And saw the pilgrim, who to Gryphon came,
With news unpleasing from his faithless dame.
He deem'd that Gryphon would her steps pursue, 5
And hence he bade his noble friends adieu,
Resolv'd to seek him with fraternal care,
To learn his fortunes and his dangers share:
When God, to prove he oft allots below
Good to the virtuous, to the wicked, woe; 10
So guides his search, that on a certain day
He met the vile Martano on the way;
Who bore before him, in proud triumph shown,
The prize of tilting by another won.

When Aquilant Martano first survey'd 15
In arms and vest of snow-white hue array'd,
He deem'd his brother near, and eager flew
To clasp his neck; but when advanc'd he knew
His fond mistake, he chang'd his first address,
And as he joy'd before, now fears no less. 20
Tell me (he cry'd) thou, whom thy looks proclaim
A thief and traitor, whence that armour came;
Whence is that garb, and why dost thou bestride
The generous steed that Gryphon wont to guide?
Say—lives my brother yet, or breathless lies? 25
How hast thou made his horse and arms thy prize?

Struck with his angry threats and dreadful sight,
Pale Origilla turns her steed for flight;
But sudden Aquilant has seiz'd the reins,
And in her own despite the dame retains. 30
Confus'd and mute, as leaves to zephyrs shake,
Martano seem'd in every limb to quake,
And pondering long how best his crime to hide,
With words of specious guile at length reply'd.
Lo! there my sister, mighty Sir, who came 35
From virtuous parents, of unfully'd name;
Till Gryphon late, regardless of her race,
Detain'd her in a life of foul disgrace:

Much

Much have I sorrow'd for her hapless sake;
But since too weak from such a knight to take 40
The helpless penitent, we fought t' obtain
By art what force could never hope to gain.
She, while he slept, from Gryphon's power withdrew;
And lest he waking should our flight pursue,
We thence convey'd his vesture, arms, and steed, 45
And now in safety on our way proceed.

So hop'd th' impostor with a sister's name
To veil the lawless partner of his shame;
But Aquilant, with kindling fury spoke:
False slave! thou ly'st—then aim'd a ponderous stroke
With lifted arm and mailed gauntlet bent, 51
And down his throat two bleeding teeth he sent:
Then with strong cords he pinion'd close behind
His caitiff-arms, and with like bonds confin'd
His foul associate, while she strove t' assuage 55
With fruitless plaints the warrior's generous rage,
Who bade the squires and all th' attending train,
With gifts enrich'd, Damascus' walls regain.

Thus journeying on, through many a town he brought
The shameless pair; then in Damascus fought 60
His brother lost, whose justice might dispense
The punishment for such unheard offence.

Arriv'd, he found that Gryphon's glorious name
Was far diffus'd on rapid wings of fame;
As one, from whom his partner's impious wiles 65
Had won the meed of arms and knightly toils.
The populace, enrag'd, Martano view,
And point him out, and with loud threats pursue.
Behold (they cry) the wretch, who seeks to raise
On other's actions his dissembled praise. 70
Yon woman see, who every vice pursu'd,
Who aids the wicked, and betrays the good.
Some thus exclaim—How well the pair agree!
Not he more treacherous than deceitful she!
With railing these, with curses those pursue 75
Their hateful way; while, eager for a view,
Through streets and squares th' impatient vulgar throng,
Press on each other's steps, and pour along.
O'erjoy'd the king, with few attendants, press'd
To meet brave Aquilant, his welcome guest, 80
And pay such honours as to him belong'd
Whose valour had aveng'd his Gryphon wrong'd.
Now Norandino, with the knight's consent,
Within a gloomy cell his captives pent:
Brave Aquilant he led, where (since the day 85
He bled in combat) wounded Gryphon lay.

They

They held debate what penance to impose
On them from whom such foul deceit arose.
They gave Martano to the hangman's hands,
Who bound his limbs, but not in flowery bands, 90
Then on the culprit many a lash bestow'd,
From street to street, amidst the gaping crowd.
But Origilla still they kept to mourn
In bonds till fair Lucina should return,
Whose sage decree (for so these lords ordain) 95
Her doom must lighten, or enforce her pain.

Here Aquilant remain'd, till Gryphon, heal'd
Of every wound, his arms again could wield.
From errors past, the king, more prudent grown,
Believes he never can enough atone 100
For such misdeed, by which he brought to shame
A knight whose worth might every tribute claim.

Now through the realms the regal mandate pass'd,
To form a joust more splendid than the last.
Soon ready Fame her rapid wings expands, 105
And spreads the tidings through the Syrian lands:
Phœnicia, Palestine, the rumour hear,
Which reach'd at length to good Astolpho's ear;
Who, with the noble regent *, bends his mind
To see the lists by Syria's prince design'd. 110

* SANSONETTO.

These sons of chivalry prepar'd to meet
 The knights at Norandino's regal seat,
 When journeying on their way, they chanc'd to light
 (Where two paths join'd) on one who seem'd a knight;
 But one, whose outward vest and looks conceal'd 115
 A virgin glorious in the martial field.
 Marphisa was her name, of generous strain,
 Who oft was known the combat to maintain
 With Brava's * mighty lord, and oft had clos'd
 With Mount Albano's †, sword to sword oppos'd. 120
 By day, by night, in shining arms array'd,
 Through woods and dales, o'er hills and plains she
 stray'd,
 To encounter wandering knights, and nobly raise
 Victorious trophies of immortal praise.

As Sanfonetto and Astolpho came 125
 In plate and mail before the fearless dame,
 Impatient in the field their force to try,
 She wheel'd her steed the strangers to defy,
 But to her mind recall'd, as near she drew,
 The Paladin, whom in Cathay she knew, 130
 Where oft she mark'd, in council and in fight,
 The gallant bearing of the English knight.

* ORLANDO.

† RINALDO.

This seen, the gauntlet from her hand she took,
 Call'd him by name, and with a gracious look
 Her beaver rais'd—the duke as gladly paid 135
 His cordial greeting to the wondrous maid.

Their journey known—Permit (Marphisa cry'd)
 My arms with yours the glory to divide.
 She said, and gladly to her wish they yield,
 O'erjoy'd at such a partner in the field. 140

At length, the day before the festive rite,
 They see Damascus rising to their sight.
 Now to the place king Norandino came,
 The place he destin'd for the dangerous game;
 While the brave virgin*, and the knightly pair †, 145
 Press through the city to the crowded square:
 The prizes doom'd that day for those who won,
 A glittering poll-ax, and a sword that shone
 With costly gems; with these the king bestow'd
 A steed, whose make and stately trappings show'd 150
 A royal gift.—The king, who surely held
 That he, who first had all opponents quell'd,
 Would win the second jousts, and bear away
 The meed and praise of each victorious day,
 To give him all that honour could demand, 155
 Those arms, which late, he doom'd with liberal hand

* MARPHISA.

† SANSONETTO and ASTOLPHO.

The victor's gift, which, from another's toils
Martano won, array'd in borrow'd spoils
Aloft he hung; the sword of temper try'd
To these he join'd; and at the courser's side 160
The poll-ax plac'd, all destin'd to requite
Brave Gryphon, from his garb furnam'd the white.
But she, who lately to the list of fame
With Sanfonetto and Astolpho came,
Soon chang'd the scene—for when before her view 165
These arms appear'd, full well her arms she knew,
Stol'n by Brunello, vers'd in arts of theft,
Who from her side the trusty sword had rest.
When now the maid, by certain tokens known,
Again in these with joy confess'd her own, 170
So dearly priz'd, no more in doubt she stay'd,
But, swift advancing, on the cuirass laid
That hand, which ne'er was wont in field to fail,
And here she seiz'd, and there she strow'd the mail
With headlong haste. The king incens'd beheld, 175
And with a look his ready train impell'd
To avenge the deed: at once the train obey'd;
The spear they brandish'd and unsheath'd the blade,
Mindless of what they found so late requite
Their insult offer'd to a wandering knight. 180

Not

Not more, when Spring unlocks his genial stores,
 The playful child delights in gaudy flowers ;
 Not more the blooming maid, with vestments gay,
 In the swift dance, or music's spritely lay ;
 Than she, whose valour every thought exceeds, 185
 Joys in the clang of arms and neigh of steeds ;
 The rattling quiver, and the crashing spear,
 When streaming blood and ghastly death appear.
 Her courser spurr'd against the thoughtless crew,
 Her lance in rest, with headlong speed she flew ; 190
 Some thro' the neck, some thro' the breast she thrust,
 Some with a shock she tumbled on the dust.
 Brave Sanfonetto and Aftolpho bold,
 Who with Marphisa came the lists to hold,
 Not mix in serious combat, when they saw 195
 The Syrian troops in rank of battle draw,
 At once their lances couch'd, their vizors clos'd,
 And pierc'd th' ignoble herd, where few oppos'd
 Their dreadful course : meantime the knights who
 came

From various realms, the candidates for fame, 200
 Their sportive weapons turn'd to slaughter view'd,
 And promis'd jousts to deeper scenes of blood.

When now the brother knights, indignant, knew
 The cause from which such dread contention grew ;

And Gryphon deem'd such insult borne must shame
Not less his own than Norandino's name; 206

Each bids his spear be brought with eager speed,
And flies to vengeance on his thundering steed.

Oppos'd to these Astolpho swift impell'd
His Rabicano, while in hand he held 210

The lance of gold, that with enchanted force
Dismounts each warrior in the martial course.

With this on earth two noble knights he leaves:

First Gryphon falls, then Aquilant receives
The weapon's point, that glancing on his shield, 215

The generous youth extended on the field.

Bold Sanfonetto from their seats remov'd

The bravest knights, in many a conflict prov'd:

Swift from the barriers throng'd th' affrighted crowd:

The king, inflam'd with anger, storm'd aloud. 220

Meanwhile Marphisa, who had driven away

Whate'er oppos'd her (victor of the day)

The late contested arms in triumph took,

And with her prize the fatal lists forsook,

Nor Sanfonetto nor Astolpho stay'd, 225

But to the gates pursued the martial maid;

While Aquilant and Gryphon mourn'd the chance

That both o'erthrew with one resistless lance.

They

They seize their courfers, and their seats regain
To chace the foe—with numbers in his train 239
The king pursues——All equal fury breathe,
Resolv'd on vengeance or resolv'd on death.
The vulgar throngs applauding clamours send,
But gaze at distance and th' event attend.

Now Gryphon came to where the three had gain'd
The bridge, and undismay'd the post maintain'd: 236
Arriv'd, he soon Astolpho knew, who wore
The same device and vests he view'd before;
The same his armour, and the same his steed,
As on the day he made Orilo bleed. 240

When Gryphon late engag'd the English knight,
The well-known marks at first escap'd his sight,
But now he knows him, greets him now with hands
Conjoin'd, and of his comrades' weal demands;
And why regardless of the reverence due 245
To Syria's king, those arms to earth they threw.
To Gryphon then great Otho's son * reveal'd
His comrades' names, and nought beside conceal'd.

While friendly thus they commun'd, nearer drew
Good Aquilant, and soon Astolpho knew: 250
The crowds at distance gaze, with looks intent,
To find from gestures what their parley meant:

* ASTOLPHO,

But

But when Marphisa's name the Syrians heard,
 That dreadful name through all the east rever'd,
 The monarch bade his troops accede to peace, 255
 Whose fury lessens as their fears increase.

Meanwhile the sons of Olivero there,
 With Sansonetto and with Otho's heir,
 By mild entreaty in Marphisa's breast
 Assuag'd the flame: she stay'd at their request, 260
 Her deathful hand; then with a haughty look
 Approaching Norandino, thus she spoke.

I know not why your victor should receive
 These arms, O king! which are not yours to give.
 These once were mine, and 'midst the public way 265
 That from Armenia leads, one fateful day
 I left behind, with better speed to chace
 A wretch from whom I suffer'd foul disgrace:
 Behold this token on the mail impress'd,
 The certain proof of what my lips attest, 270
 Cleft in three parts a monarch's regal crest.

Four days are past, since from th' Armenian land
 (The king reply'd) a merchant to my hand
 This armour brought, and wouldst thou this obtain,
 Think not thy tongue shall ask the gift in vain: 275
 No signs I seek to prove this armour yours,
 Your word, your valour, my belief secures.

Now

Now take thy own—here all contention leave,
And Gryphon shall from me a richer gift receive.

Gryphon, who little had these arms desir'd, 280
But still in all to please the king aspir'd,
Thus made reply—For me it shall suffice,
That aught you wish my glad consent supplies.

Marphisa, who beheld the part they took
To save her honour, with benignant look 285
To Gryphon begg'd these arms her gift to make,
Which Gryphon at her hand vouchsaf'd to take.

Now to the city all again pursu'd
Their cheerful way, in peace and love renew'd;
But soon the state of France, by foes oppress'd, 290
Awakes new thoughts in every knightly breast:
Their leave they take: with these, by glory fir'd,
Marphisa went, for long her soul aspir'd
To meet the Paladins in fields of fame,
And prove if each deserv'd so great a name. 295

Then in one friendly band together join'd,
These five, whose equals scarce the world can find,
Dismiss'd by Norandino reach'd the land
Of Tripoli, where on the neighbouring strand
The billows break, and where a bark they view'd 300
With freight prepar'd to stem the western flood;

An

An aged pilot there (the terms agreed)
Receives aboard each warrior and his steed.

The pilot now his voyage to pursue,
While o'er the wave the favouring breezes blew, 305
Turn'd to the sea his prow, his anchor weigh'd,
And every canvas to the gale display'd.
Now distant from the port the vessel stood,
And plough'd with happy speed the briny flood,
Long as the sun above th' horizon shin'd; 310
But, when black evening rose, the changing wind
Howl'd through the shrowds, and from the lowest deep
With warring waves assail'd the reeling ship.
Wide yawns the firmament from pole to pole,
Quick flash the lightnings, loud the thunders roll; 315
Thick clouds in darkness veil th' ethereal light,
Nor sun by day, nor star appears by night.
South, east, and west, in rattling whirlwinds blow;
Heaven groans above, and ocean roars below.
Huge cataracts descend of hail and rain; 320
The wretched sailors every woe sustain,
And horror broods upon the angry main.
One with his whistle's sound the want of speech
Supplies, and gives the needful charge to each:
This at the anchor toils; that strikes the sails; 325
This strains or loosens, as the storm prevails,

The

The creaking cordage; that the deck ascends;
The rudder this, and that the mast defends.

Nor day nor night the furious winds assuag'd,
By day with fiercer strength the tempest rag'd; 330

If that were day, which not returning light,
But lapse of hours, distinguish'd from the night.

One stands apart and marks, with head declin'd,
The vessel's course, as pale beside him shin'd

The lanthorn's gleam; one at the stern explores 535
The glasses' sands that show the waning hours,

And oft returns to learn the vessel's way,
How far her track, and how her bearings lay.

Then in the middle ship, with chart in hand,
Each hastens where th' affrighted sailor-band 340 }
Their pilot meet, and mutual aid demand.

At length the wind the shatter'd foresail tears,
And from the stern the sea the rudder bears.

Who fears not now must bear a breast of steel,
Or marble heart, unknowing how to feel. 345

Marphisa, she who danger late defy'd,
No longer here her secret dread deny'd.

What vows of pilgrimage the seamen frame!
To Sinai, Rome, Ettino's virgin-dame,

Galitia, Cyprus, but o'er all so dear, 350
That hallow'd tomb which Christian souls revere!

Meantime

Meantime aloft amidst the furling tides,

Amidst the clouds the groaning vessel rides.

The trembling pilot from the creaking mast

The mainsail cuts, and now he bids to cast 355

From poop or prow, into the greedy flood,

Huge chests and bales, with every useless load.

One ply'd the pump, from rushing streams to free

The ship, and to the sea return'd the sea.

Another watch'd where'er the surge he spy'd 360

With lashing force the plank from plank divide.

Four dreadful days, on mountain-billows cast,

The seamen toil'd, and every hope was past;

When sudden breaking on their raptur'd sight,

Appear'd the splendor of Saint Ermo's light: 365

Low settling on the prow, with ray serene

It shone, for masts or sails no more were seen.

The crew elated saw the dancing gleam;

Each, on his knees, ador'd the favouring beam;

And begg'd, with trembling voice and watery eyes,

A truce from threatening waves and raging skies. 371

Now from Laiazzo's gulph the Syrian lands

They see, where high a peopled city stands,

Of circuit wide; and nearer they survey

A fort on either side to guard the bay. 375

Soon as the pilot well the land espies,
On his pale cheek the frighted colour dies :
He loaths the hateful coast ; yet would he try
The deep once more, he knows not how to fly :
His masts and yards are lost, and rent away, 380
His sails and tackling scatter'd o'er the sea.

While unresolv'd in doubt the pilot stands
Which course to take, the English knight demands
What secret thoughts his wavering breast divide,
And why he sought not in the port to ride ? 385
To whom the pilot thus—Yon hostile strand
Is lin'd with women, whose inhuman hand,
By ancient law, each stranger-guest consigns
To death relentless, or in chains confines :
He only 'scapes, whose arms in measur'd field 390
Can make ten champions to his prowess yield ;
And next the ties of gentle union prove
With ten fair partners of his nuptial love.
Should he succeed in battle's sterner claim,
Yet fail in love to win each willing dame, 395
He dies ; and, destin'd to ignoble toil,
His friends the cattle feed, or turn the soil !
But should he both the doubtful palms obtain,
He gains full freedom for his social train,

Himself

Himself unfree—for husband he remains 400
Of ten fair females, as his choice ordains.

He said : deep terror seiz'd the sailor crew :
Not so Marphisa and the warlike few ;
Far other they, who safer deem'd the shore
Beset with arms, than seas where tempests roar ; 405
This—every place—they held secure from fear,
Where'er their grasp could wield the sword or spear.
Eager they burn the hostile strand to gain ;
But England's warrior, foremost of the train,
Demands to land ; his magic horn he knew 410
(If arms should fail) would every force subdue.
Now divers parts they took : these loudly cry'd
To make the port, as loudly those deny'd.
At length the pilot, urg'd by stronger force,
Unwilling to the harbour shap'd his course. 415

Meantime the knights their limbs in armour case,
And by their sides the trusty falchion place,
And strive, with dauntless looks and words, to cheer
The pilot's doubts and ease the seamen's fear.

The harbour enter'd, soon by rumour blown, 420
The ship's arrival through the land was known,
And arm'd with bows in all the dress of war,
Six thousand females to the port repair.

A range

A range of ships from rock to rock they place,
All hope of flight from every breast to chace, 425
And with huge chains, prepar'd for such design,
Close up the port, and all within confine.
An aged matron, who in length of years
Like Hecuba of Cuma's maid appears,
The pilot calls, and wills him to reply 430
If there his wretched partners choose to die;
Or wiser, as the country's laws declare,
Submit their necks the servile yoke to bear.
To each the choice is offer'd—there to fall
With freedom—or survive in hopeless thrall. 435
The pilot, first in general council weigh'd,
Their answer to the hoary dame convey'd,
That one amongst them stood prepar'd to prove
The claim of battle first, and then of love.

No more oppos'd, the seamen now secure 440
Their anchor, and on land the vessel moor.
The bridge is cast, and from the deck proceed
The shining warrior and the prancing steed.
Amidst the city with surprise they view
The mighty numbers of the female crew. 445
The men nor spear, nor sword, are seen to bear,
Nor aught of weapons that pertain to war,

Save only ten—and these in dangerous field,
 (So ancient custom wills)—their lances wield:
 The rest attend the loom, the needle ply, 450
 Or twist the wool, or cull the various dye:
 Adown their limbs long matron-garments flow,
 Their mien is feminine, their pace is slow.
 Some kept in chains, at will their tyrants send
 The lands to culture, and the herds to tend. 455

The knights, who deem'd by lot to fix his name,
 Whose arm might for the rest the combat claim,
 Would from the chance the martial dame * withhold,
 By sex unfit, amidst their names enroll'd,
 Both palms to win; but she with noble pride 460
 Will with her peers the fated scroll abide:
 On her it fell—I first in fight will die
 Ere you (she cry'd) in cruel bondage lie:
 This steel (and as she spoke her trusty sword
 She grasp'd) your pledge of safety shall afford: 465
 With this I mean each fatal tye to loose,
 As Persia's victor † cut the Gordian noose.

Far in the city was a square enclos'd,
 And set apart, with seats around dispos'd,
 To please the vulgar herd with many a fray 470
 Of wrestling, tournament, and martial play.

* MARPHISA.

† ALEXANDER.

Four brazen portals open in the place,
Where females fill with arms the crowded space.
Marphisa enters on a dappled steed,
Of colour grey, of more than vulgar breed; 475
Small was his head, his joints were strongly knit,
Proudly he paw'd, and champ'd the frothy bit:
Fire flash'd his eyes—this from a thousand more
Of generous strain in Norandino's store,
The monarch chose, and, deck'd with trappings brave,
The regal present to Marphisa gave, 481
Who, entering at the south, where on the gate
The mid-day shone, stood still the charge to wait:
Then from the portal of the north she saw
Her ten opponents to the combat draw. 485
The first bold knight, who look'd himself a host,
Seem'd in his arm the force of all to boast.
The list he enter'd on a courser's back
Of strongest limbs, and more than raven black,
Save that his front and hindmost foot display'd 490
Some snow-white hairs amidst the dusky shade.
Clad like his steed in sable weeds of woe
The champion came, as if he meant to show
An emblem of his own distressful state,
How small his comfort, and his griefs how great! 495

The trumpet sounds, and to the charge address,
At once nine warriors place the lance in rest :
But he, the mourning knight, whose noble heart
Disdains th' advantage, stands awhile apart ;
Apart he stands, the conflict to survey, 500
And see one lance with nine dispute the day.

The steed, with easy pace and steady force,
Bore the brave virgin to th' unequal course,
Who wielded in her grasp so huge a spear,
Scarce four suffic'd th' enormous weight to rear. 505
So fierce she came, with such a dauntless look,
A thousand cheeks grew pale, a thousand bosoms shook.

Swift through the first, as if his fenceless breast
No armour wore, the furious steel she press'd :
The weapon pass'd, with matchless strength impell'd,
His plated shield, and through his cuirass held. 511
The virgin left the wretched warrior slain,
And turn'd against the rest with loosen'd rein :
Against the second bold advancing foe,
And next the third, she dealt so fierce a blow, 515
That either's spinal bone the weapon broke,
And both at once their seats and life forsook.

Together now the remnant six engag'd
The gallant maid, and war united wag'd.

Against

Against her corslet javelins snapt in vain, 520
While she unmov'd could every stroke sustain.
In tennis thus, not more the fencing wall
Resists the impulse of the bounding ball.
In vain the force of hostile weapon sought
To pierce her arms, of purest temper wrought; 525
By magic wrought in Styx's burning steam,
And hissing plung'd in black Avernus' stream.
Now at the barrier bounds awhile she stay'd,
Then wheel'd her courser, and with brandish'd blade
The rest assail'd, her victory pursu'd, 530
And to the elbows dy'd her arms in blood.
From this a hand, from that she lops the head:
On one the ghastly sword so just is sped,
Head, arms, and breast fall sever'd on the plain;
The legs and belly on the steed remain: 535
Thus half the man (a dreadful sight) appear'd:
So holy pilgrims, to the saint rever'd,
For members heal'd, of wax or silver frame
The parts restor'd, and in their patron's name
Suspend the pious gift to him whose aid they claim. }
Thus by her valour each in turn was slain, 541
Or lay extended senseless on the plain,
That well she knew he never more could rear
The massy buckler or the pointed spear.

The champion in the list retir'd alone, 545
Who saw the nine by one brave arm o'erthrown,
Now spurr'd his steed, but first by signs began
To ask a parley ere the course he ran;
And little thinking that with man's array,
Conceal'd in martial weeds a virgin lay, 550
Graceful he spoke—Thy spirits, valiant knight,
May surely droop in such unequal fight;
Till morn I give thee from the field to rest,
Then may'st thou turn to fresher strife address:
So shall my sword a nobler combat claim, 555
Nor with thy vigour spent pollute my fame.

To warlike feats these limbs have long been bred;
Nor have I toil'd so far (Marphisa said)
But to thy cost, I trust, thou soon shalt know
My nerve and spirit equal to my foe. 560
Thy words, the proffer of a courteous breast,
I praise, but seek not yet so soon to rest;
Still shines the day, and 'twere a shame for knight
To lose in sloth the yet remaining light.

The stranger then—O! that my woe-struck mind
Could gain as sure each good it pants to find, 566
As thou from me thy fill of arms shalt taste,
And find perchance the day too quickly waste.

He

He said; and strait two beamy lances, wrought
Like ponderous masts, he bids with speed be brought;
To bold Marphisa's hand the choice he gives, 571
The spear which she rejects himself receives,
The trumpet sounds—the courfers shake the ground,
Earth, air, and sea, the thundering charge resound.
With eyes unmov'd each mute assistant stands; 575
No word, no breath, is heard through all the bands!
So fix'd was each to mark with longing gaze,
Which knight would win the palm of knightly praise.
Marphisa aims her spear with eager force,
To hurl the sable warrior from his horse, 580
No more to rise; nor less the sable foe
Thinks with a thrust to lay Marphisa low.
The chosen spears like sapless osiers broke,
Up to the rest they shiver'd with the stroke:
At once, as if a scythe with sweepy sway 585
Had cut the nerves, on earth each courser lay.
Soon as they touch'd the ground, the warriors stood
On foot recover'd, and the fight renew'd.
Each weapon's edge and point by turns they ply'd;
With sword and shield they fenc'd, or leap'd aside 590
To shun the stroke: the well-aim'd stroke rebounds;
The stroke that miss'd, in hissing air resounds.

The battle lasted till declining light,
Nor seem'd th' advantage to the dame or knight;
And now so deep, the shades increasing, grow, 595
Not this, nor that, can ward the threatening blow.
Now darkness clos'd—when to the glorious maid,
With courteous mien, the generous warrior said.

What can we more, since night obtrudes her veil,
While yet the battle hangs in equal scale? 600
Then hear, O chief! awhile prolong thy life,
At least till morn revives the noble strife:
If to thy wasting days a single night
I only grant—no blame on me must light;
Condemn the law of this accursed race, 605
The female sex that rule this hated place.
But HE, from whom no art the truth conceals,
Knows if for thee and thine my bosom feels,
Thou and thy fellows may'st with me reside,
With others, danger will thy sleep betide. 610
Against thee now conspire the female train,
Whose husbands by thy conquering hand are slain.
For know that each, who by thy arm lies dead,
Ten wives possess'd: hence ninety females led
To seek revenge (unless with me you rest) 615
In night's dead silence may your sleep molest.

Marphisa

Marphisa then—I gladly shall receive
The fair asylum which thou deign'st to give:
Secure in thee such virtuous faith to find
As suits thy courage and exalted mind ! 620
Now, at thy choice, the combat urge or stay;
Or meet by moon-light, or by light of day:
Whate'er thou seek'st, behold me ready still
Each hour a warrior's duty to fulfil.

Unfinish'd thus they left the glorious fight, 625
Till Ganges' stream should glow with golden light.
To Aquilant, to Gryphon, all the train
Of gallant champions, came the knight humane,
With generous suit to each by turns addrest,
Beneath his hospitable roof to rest, 630
All gladly yield, and now with cheerful blaze
Of torches' light, the lord his guests conveys
To reach his regal dome, where every room
With splendor shone and labours of the loom.

Now from each head the martial helmet rais'd, 635
The two brave combatants with wonder gaz'd.
The stranger-knight was fresh and fair of hue,
His downy cheeks but eighteen summers knew.
The virgin marvell'd much his arm could wage
Such dreadful battles in so green an age; 640

Nor

Nor less he wonder'd, when her helm unclos'd,
 Her flowing locks and beauteous sex expos'd,
 His foe but late!—now each with like demand
 Enquires the other's actions, name, and land.

Then to the youth the martial dame reveal'd 645
 In few her dreadful name, till then conceal'd:
 Marphisa am I call'd——no more she said,
 For Fame through every realm the rest had spread.
 The stranger then——All here, I trust, may know
 The glorious stock to which my birth I owe: 650
 Who has not heard of Clarmont's mighty name,
 Whence the bold knight * who slew Almontes came;
 And he †, by whom the fierce Mambrino slain
 (His kingdom laid in ruin) press'd the plain.
 That blood I boast—and near the Euxine waves, 655
 Where Ister with his streams the region laves,
 To Amon's duke (who on that fated shore
 His wanderings ended) me Constantia bore.
 One year has roll'd, since her, in sorrow lost,
 I left to seek my friends on Gallia's coast: 660
 But, 'midst the voyage, rose a stormy wind,
 And hither drove me from the port design'd.
 Ten months have past, since here detain'd I mourn
 The lingering hours, and curse each day's return.

* ORLANDO, VOL. 1. 11. † RINALDO.

Guido the Savage, am I call'd——a name 665
Scarce yet recorded on the list of fame.

Here with the ten th' unequal list I try'd;
By me the ten in fatal combat dy'd,
And now ten wedded partners grace my side.

He said: the warriors Guido then demand 670
Why men were banish'd from that impious strand;
Why women there usurp'd unwonted sway,
And made the husband female rule obey.

When Guido thus: What time the Grecian powers
From Troy return'd to view their country's shores, 675
Phalantus exil'd, left his native land,
With many a youth (a hundred form'd their band),
Unhappy children, born of lawless love,
Condemn'd a wretched vagrant life to prove.
These, in a ship, with all provisions stor'd, 680
Each foreign clime for wealth and prey explor'd.
The Cretans, that Idomeneus expell'd,
(The cruel sire who Crete's dominion held)
Engag'd Phalantus with his friends, to guard
Dictamnum's walls, against a siege prepar'd. 685
The Cretan dames, accusom'd to receive
Each foreign guest, to these such welcome give
That little wanted for Phalantus' train
O'er female hearts t' extend love's gentle reign.

They

They saw, they woo'd—the fair their vows return'd,
And each for each with mutual ardor burn'd. 691

Now peace restor'd, the soldier's labours o'er,
The youths prepar'd to quit the Cretan shore:
Th' enamour'd dames, their voyage to partake,
Friends, parents, brethren, every tie forsake. 695

Each from her dwelling bears, with wary stealth,
Rich gems of price, and countless sums of wealth;
And many a league their vessel plough'd the tide,
Ere those of Crete their heavy loss descry'd.
At length this fated land (then scarcely prest 700

By foot of mortals) gave the wanderers rest.
Ten days to them the region seem'd a seat
Of endless pleasures, and a blest retreat:
But soon these exiles, wearied with the charge
Of female mates, resolv'd to live at large. 705

Past love forgot, their partners they forsook,
And, laden with their spoils, their course they took,
To where in Puglia, on the sea-beat shores,
They founded fair Tarentum's rising towers.

The dames, abandon'd on a lonely coast, 710
Betray'd by those in whom they trusted most,
Along the sands some days in silent grief
Like statues stood; but finding no relief

From

From prayers or tears, they turn'd them to debate 714
What means might best relieve their wretched state,
When, what her thoughts suggested, each disclos'd:
Some to regain their native Crete propos'd,
And rather dare the worst they might engage
From a wrong'd parent, or a kinsman's rage,
Than hid in deserts, or in forests lie, 720
With want to linger, or with famine die.
Some vow'd they never to such shame would bend,
But rather, plung'd in seas, their being end;
And deem'd it better far, with honour lost,
Though poor, or slaves, to rove from coast to coast.

At length a female, Oronthea nam'd, 726
Stood forth, who kindred from king Minos claim'd;
To brave Phalantus she her virgin charms
Resign'd, and left for him her parents' arms.
Now while her speech and outward looks express'd
The indignation of a generous breast, 731
She first condemn'd what each had singly mov'd,
Then gave that counsel, which the rest approv'd.

She will'd them there to dwell, for there they found
A healthful air, and fields with plenty crown'd; 735
Clear silver streams that through the meadows stray'd,
Rich spreading meads, and forests thick with shade;

She

She urg'd them there t' abide, and for the sake
 Of those that wrong'd them, heavy vengeance take
 On all the sex; and every vessel tost 740
 By tempests, driven to shelter on the coast,
 Pillage and burn, assail with fire and steel,
 Nor let a single life their mercy feel.

Thus counsell'd she, till all alike inflam'd
 With cruel thoughts, the new-made law proclaim'd.

When winds foretel a storm, the desperate train 746
 Of females arm'd, rush headlong to the main;
 Their fury ruthless Oronthea guides,
 Who now their queen, above the rest presides.
 Whate'er devoted strangers 'scape the flood, 750
 But 'scape to drench this cruel soil with blood.
 Year following year, the widow'd females show
 This settled hate of man, their mortal foe.

At length new fears their vengeful breasts assail;
 With lapse of time their numbers soon must fail, 755
 And should no offspring from themselves descend,
 Their state, their vengeance, and their name must
 end,

Which to remotest days they labour'd to extend.
 Their rigour, hence relax'd, from many a band,
 By choice or fortune driven to touch the land, 760

Ten youthful knights of manly form, they take,
And partners of their bed and kingdom make;
But swear them first, that every wanderer led
(Whate'er his rank) these hapless shores to tread
Without distinction by the sword shall fall, 765
And one remorseless slaughter swallow all.
Yet left, in future time, the numbers born,
Of issue male, should hold their law in scorn,
And they at length behold, in evil hour,
To hated man revert their darling power; 770
The female train, in synod met, decreed,
Each mother's care one only male should breed,
This doom'd to every task of servile toil,
To tend the herds, or till the fertile soil.

Now, years elaps'd, his luckless fortune bore 775
A noble youth to this inhuman shore,
From great Alcides' stock his birth he claim'd,
In arms experienc'd, and Elbanio nam'd:
Him, with his crew, they seiz'd, and kept in thrall,
Sad victims destin'd by their laws to fall, 780
Where in the fane, by Oronthea rear'd,
A dreadful altar to Revenge appear'd.
Fair was the youth, of semblance rarely seen,
Of graceful carriage, and commanding mien;

So from his lips the honey'd accents broke, 785
That venom'd asps might listen while he spoke.
From fame the news of his arrival caught,
To Alexandra's gentle ear was brought;
Fair Alexandra, born of her who sway'd
The sceptre still, though now with years decay'd: 790
Still Oronthea liv'd, but none surviv'd,
Save her alone, of all that first arriv'd.

Ten knights, renown'd for deeds of arms achiev'd,
With hostile welcome all that came receiv'd.
Now Alexandra, eager to behold 795
A youth, whose praise report so loudly told,
To Oronthea her request preferr'd,
And saw Elbanio, and his converse heard.
But when she sought to go, her virgin heart
Felt the first throbbing of an amorous dart: 800
Elbanio then—O! fairest of thy kind,
If pity here could e'er reception find;
Pity, which dwells where'er the sun display'd
Gives tints to objects, or gives light to shade,
Fain would I now (by those transcendant charms,
Whose powerful influence every gazer warms) 806
From thee request my life, that what I owe
To thee prolong'd, for thee I might bestow:

Whate'er

Whate'er my fate—O! give me but to wield
My glorious arms, and die with spear and shield; 810
Not like some criminal, whom laws arraign,
Or brutal beast before the altar slain.

Fair Alexandra, in whose lovely eyes
Compassion pleaded for the youth, replies.

O! would to Heaven I could as well arrest 815
Th' inhuman law that binds each wretched guest,
As freely now my death I would receive,
And, with my own, thy better life relieve.

But here no worth avails to break thy chain,
And, what thou ask'st, tho' little, hard to gain: 820

Yet what I can, expect—while much I dread
New sufferings hang o'er thy devoted head.

Let me but meet (Elbanio thus rejoin'd)

The ten in field—so firm my heart I find,

I trust to 'scape with life the bloody fray, 825

And every foe, though trebly arm'd, to slay.

To this the virgin fair made no reply,

But from her bosom drew a tender sigh;

Then fought her mother, and with earnest prayer

Inclin'd the queen the noble youth to spare, 830

On this condition, that in lists of fight

The ten should perish by his single might.

Queen Oronthea then the female train
To council call'd, and thus her speech began.

From every crew, whom chance may hither send,
We still should place the bravest to defend 836

Our port and shores; by trial must we choose
What fits our wants to take, and what refuse.

If to my judgment, you O friends! agree,
Let us henceforth a sovereign law decree, 840

That every knight, by fortune hither led,
Ere in the dreadful fane his blood we shed,

Shall (in such compact if he dares engage)
At once with ten the combat singly wage;

And, should he conquer, with a chosen train 845
Of brave associates, shall our guard maintain.

Thus far I speak, since in our prison lies
A captive, who to battle ten defies.

Should he their equal prove—forbid it, Heaven!
But to such worth some favour should be given: 850

Or should he fail in what he rashly dares,
He meets the punishment himself prepares.

She ceas'd; her reasons weigh'd, with one consent
The council yielded to the queen's intent.

At length 'twas fix'd, the youth should grace obtain
When in the list his arm the ten had slain; 856

And

And pledg'd his faith with ten fair dames to prove
The sacred bands of hymeneal love.

Th' ensuing day, to liberty restor'd,
The knight receiv'd his armour, steed, and sword; 860
Alone against the warrior ten he stood,
And one by one he shed their vital blood.

For this the youth with Oronthea won
Such sovereign grace, she chose him for her son,
And gave him Alexandra's charms to wed, 865
With her nine virgins, whom at choice he led
The lovely partners of his nuptial bed. }

She left the youth (with Alexandra fair,
From whom the land was nam'd) her kingdom's heir,
On such condition, that his future reign 870
Might still this statute through the realm maintain,
That every warrior there should lose his life,
Or meet ten warriors in unequal strife.

These should he first in dangerous combat foil,
Then find, with ten fair dames, his fortune smile; 875
Here should he live, till to the land arriv'd
Some foreign knight that him of life depriv'd.

Two thousand years have roll'd, since first was plann'd
This hateful law, and still it rules the land.

Few days elapse, but for a sacrifice 880
Some hapless victim in the temple dies.

Of when, as chance directs, some fearless knight
Dares like Elbanio arm him for the fight,
Stretch'd in the list his lifeless limbs are spread,
And ah! how few survive the ten to wed! 885

Thus fell their last brave chief—but little space
He, with his wives, maintain'd the sovereign place;
For hither driven by tempests from the deep,
I clos'd his eyes in everlasting sleep.

O! had I fall'n with him in bloody strife, 890
And not prolong'd in bonds a shameful life.

Gay pleasures, smiling sports, and amorous toys;
Each soft delight that youth like mine employs;
Rich vests and jewels that the person grace;
And, 'midst his peers, pre-eminence of place; 895
Heaven knows avail but little him, who crost
By envious Fortune, has his freedom lost!

Ah! wretch! that while I thus my bonds deplore,
Must never hope to quit this hateful shore!

To see vile sloth my fairest flower destroy 900
In prime of life, embitters every joy.

The fame of Clarmont wide her wings extends
To highest heaven from earth's remotest ends—

O! to my brethren's could I join my name, 904
My deeds with theirs might honour's portion claim!

Here

Here Guido clos'd his speech, and curs'd the day
That gave him o'er the land detested sway;
Gave him from either field the prize to bear,
To slay the champions, and to wed the fair.

Astolpho silent stood, awhile conceal'd, 910
Till now by many a certain mark reveal'd,
In him his kinsman Guido well he knew,
Who by an alien's bed his birth from Amon drew.

Then thus—Behold the English duke confess'd,
Thy own Astolpho here—he said, and prefs'd 915
The youthful champion with a close embrace,
While tears of pleasure trickled down his face.
What proof so certain could we here receive?
What proof, dear kinsman, could thy mother leave
To speak thy birth, like what thy sword has shown
In glorious fight, to stamp thee for our own? 921

He said; o'erjoy'd his kinsman Guido knew,
And strain'd him close, and to his bosom grew.

Marphisa then—Unite thee to our band,
And let us quit by force this hated land. 925
Such hopes, alas! are fruitless (he reply'd),
Our combat only must our fate decide.
Then she—This heart through fear shall never shun
The glorious task my arms have once begun:

Such in the battle have I prov'd thy might, 930

With thee I dare the most unequal fight.

When, on to-morrow's sun, the vulgar crew

Shall throng the theatre our fight to view,

Let us on all our deathful rage dispense,

On those that fly, and those that make defence; 935

To wolves and vultures cast their bodies dead,

And see the flames on all their city spread.

Behold me ready (fearless Guido cry'd)

To join thy arms, and perish by thy side:

For never must we hope with life to fly; 940

Suffice that unreveng'd we shall not die.

Oft have I told, of this inhuman race,

Ten thousand females in the crowded space;

As many guard the castle, walls, and strand,

That none, unquestion'd, can depart the land. 945

To whom Marphisa—Be their numbers more

Than Xerxes muster'd on the Grecian shore:

Than those rebellious spirits, justly driven

To endless pains from blissful seats of heaven,

Be thou my aid—at least, assist not those; 950

One day shall see me rout this host of foes.

Then Guido—Hear what haply may prevail;

All other means are vain if this should fail:

Of all my wives, in one I chief confide,
By many a proof of long affection try'd. 955
She in the bay, ere morn has clear'd the air
From murky shade, a pinnace shall prepare,
Which, amply stor'd, your mariners shall find,
To plough the deep and catch the favouring wind.
You close behind my guiding steps pursue, 960
Knights, merchants, seamen, (a determin'd crew)
United firmly; every welcome guest
That here has deign'd beneath my roof to rest.
Should aught oppose to intercept our course,
Your arms and valour must a passage force; 965
And thus, I trust, with spear and sword in hand,
To set you free from this detested land.

Act as thou wilt (Marphisa thus reply'd),
I for my safety in myself confide.
Yet were my sex disclos'd, a woman's name 970
Would fair regard from every female claim.
Here might I dwell esteem'd in highest grace,
And 'midst their senate hold an honour'd place;
But since with these I came, with these to share
One common fortune is alone my care; 975
Nor would I poorly freedom here retain,
Or hence depart, while these in bonds remain.

Marphisa thus reveal'd her generous mind,
Then to his charge th' important day resign'd.

Guido, by night, his faithful dame address'd, 980
Aleria, of his comforts lov'd the best:

And little speech her gentle bosom mov'd,
To second all her dearest lord approv'd.

A ship she chose with due provisions stor'd,
And all her wealthiest treasures plac'd on board; 985

Then, with her comrades, feign'd at morning break
In search of spoil a venturous cruise to make.

Meanwhile, beneath her roof she bade prepare
Spears, bucklers, swords, each implement of war:

All night, against surprise, the guard they keep, 990
By turns they hold the watch, by turns they sleep;

And sheath'd in armour wait, with longing eyes,
To see the dawning red in eastern skies.

Scarce had the day begun with beamy light
To chase from earth the gloomy veil of night, 995

When in the theatre the female throng,
To view the combat, pour'd in heaps along:

Thus o'er the threshold of their peopled hive,
When spring returns, the bees in clusters drive.

With trumpets, drums, and horns, that echo'd round,
The tumult thickens; earth and skies resound; 1001

While

While thus their lord * they summon'd to the fight,
To end his battle with the stranger knight.

In armour Guido, Sanfonetto came,
Gryphon, and Aquilant, the martial dame †, 1005
With England's duke ‡; and next a mingled crowd,
Some march'd on foot, and some the steed bestrode,
From Guido's dwelling, to the port and bay,
Their passage through the list of combat lay:
Thus said the youth, and urg'd the valiant crew 1010
His bold example fearless to pursue.

Silent he led them on, resolv'd to dare
The dreadful trial in the public square.
He enter'd now, a hundred in his train,
And eager strove the adverse gate to gain; 1015
In vain he strove, while countless throngs enclos'd,
And with their glittering arms his course oppos'd.

Guido, his bold compeers with dauntless breast,
But chief Marphisa, brave above the rest,
Forget not now their dreadful swords to ply, 1020
And every means to force the passage try.
But soon so thick the arrows rain around,
That wounded some, some lifeless press the ground.
Deep, and more deep, th' unequal conflict grows,
Till valour shrinks before such hosts of foes: 1025

* GUIDO.

† MARPHISA.

‡ ASTOLPHO.

Beneath

Beneath him Sanfonetto's steed is slain,
 And near him falls Marphisa's on the plain:
 Then thus Astolpho thought—What dangerous hour
 Can better claim my horn's subduing power?
 Since all our swords avail not—let us prove 1030
 If this, as wont, can every foe remove.

Thus he; and to his mouth the horn applies;
 The earth resounds, and echoes rend the skies.
 Each startled breast is seiz'd with sudden fright,
 Each ready foot is turn'd to speedy flight; 1035
 These from their seats aghast and trembling fall,
 Those undefended leave the gates and wall.
 As, when deep slumber every eyelid seals,
 Where, by degrees, the flame close lurking steals
 From beam to beam, till all around it preys; 1040
 Sudden awaken'd in the fiery blaze,
 From room to room the shrieking wretches fly,
 From roofs and windows leap, while from on high
 Some 'scape by falling, some by falling die. }
 Thus, careless of her life, and wild with fear, 1045
 Each flies the sound that thunders in her ear.
 At every gate at once a thousand press;
 Heaps fall on heaps; the driving throngs increase,
 And choke the passage; numbers trod beneath
 Are slain; and numbers meet untimely death, 1050
 From

From gates or ramparts cast : one sudden dies ;

One, with crush'd limbs, a lingering victim lies !

Dire is the tumult, mingled cries ascend,

And loud laments the starry regions rend.

Where'er the horn is heard, they speed their pace ;

Nor wonder if the vile ignoble race 1056

With coward looks and panting hearts appear,

Since nature forms the dastard hare to fear ;

But how of bold Marphisa shall I tell ?

Of Guido Savage, prov'd in fight so well ? 1060

Of Olivero's * sons, whose martial praise

Such lasting honours to their house could raise :

Who late whole armies view'd with fearless eye,

And now, bereft of courage, trembling fly ?

Meantime Astolpho through the city goes, 1065

And with new breath his horn terrific blows.

One gains the sea ; one climbs the mountain's side,

And one in gloomy forests seeks to hide.

Some traverse many a league of country o'er,

And some review their native seats no more ; 1070

While some t' escape from land would stem the wave,

And find in ruthless seas a watery grave.

Each house, or dome, is now an empty space,

And all the city shows a desert place.

* GRYPHON and AQUILANT.

Marphisa,

Marphisa, Guido bold, the brethren two, 1075
 Gryphon and Aquilant, their flight pursue;
 With these the merchants, and the sailor-train,
 In equal terror throng the beaten plain;
 And now they come, where near the castle rides
 A vessel which Aleria's care provides: 1080
 With speed embarking, they forsake the shore,
 Hoist every sail, and bend to every oar.

Their terror now dispell'd, the fear of blame
 In every feature lights the glow of shame:
 They dare not meet their comrades' eyes, but stand
 With down-cast eyes, a mute dejected band. 1086

The pilot, on his course, by Cyprus glides,
 By fertile Rhodes, and cuts th' Egean tides.
 From Sicily, the Tyrrhene surges crost,
 He sails by Italy's delightful coast; 1090
 And now to Luna's wish'd-for port he bends,
 And hails his home and long-forsaken friends.

The warriors here with bold Marphisa find,
 In happy time, a ship for France design'd.
 The pilot these invites: the willing train 1095
 That day embark, and soon Marseilles they gain.
 They quit the ship—Marphisa bids adieu
 To Guido's dame, to all the knightly crew.

It ill beseem'd, in one same troop (she cry'd)
To view so many knights of valour try'd: 1100
While doves and storks are seen together join'd,
And deer and stags, with all the timorous kind;
Bears, lions, tigers, beasts that know not fear,
Unaided still, and single still appear.

Such were her words, tho' not alike they weigh'd
With all the rest; but hence the wondrous maid 1106
The champions leaves, and travels thence, alone,
Through unfrequented woods and paths unknown.

Druenza past, the Seine and Rhodan's stream,
At length she near a lofty mountain came; 1110
There by a flood, with sudden waters swell'd,
An aged crone in sable weeds beheld:
With travel spent she seem'd, and fore distressed,
But more with heavy thought than toil oppress.
Lo! this was she, who far from haunts of men, 1115
Had liv'd with outlaws in the savage den;
Where Heaven Orlando brought with valorous hand
To wreak full justice on that impious band.
Beside the stream she waits, and now she meets
The seeming knight, and low saluting, greets: 1120
Beseeching, on his steed to wait her o'er
Th' opposing torrent to the further shore.

Marphisa,

Marphisa, courteous from her earliest years,
 Across the flood the ancient beldame bears,
 And, past the ford, disdains not to convey 1125
 Behind her courser, till they pass'd a way
 Heavy with slough—when clad in armour bright,
 With trappings rich they met an unknown knight,
 Gay pacing tow'rs the stream; with him a dame,
 And single squire (his sole attendant) came. 1130
 Fair was the dame he brought, but fair in vain,
 Her haughty carriage cast a deepening stain
 On all her beauty, while her scorn and pride
 Seem'd well befitting him that grac'd her side.

This knight was Pinabel, whose guile betray'd,
 At Merlin's cave, Albano's martial maid *: 1136
 For her, whom now beneath his care he led,
 His sighs were breath'd, his frequent tears were shed;
 For her, whom then the magic tower detain'd:
 But when Atlantes' guile no more restrain'd 1140
 His captives, freed by brave Dordona's * dame,
 She, not unmindful of her former flame,
 To Pinabel return'd, and with him still
 Wander'd from tower to tower, o'er forest, dale, and hill.
 Soon as she view'd Marphisa's aged crone, 1145

The shameless fair, to taunting ever prone,

* BRADAMANT.

No more the venom of her tongue suppress'd,
But gave full vent to many a scornful jest.

Incens'd Marphisa to the dame replies :

My partner shall with thee dispute the prize 1150
Of beauty's bloom—then offers on her knight
To vouch the proof; and these the terms of fight,
That, if o'erthrown her lover press'd the field,
The damsel should her vest and palfrey yield.

Here Pinabello, rous'd by sense of shame 1155

T' accept the challenge and defend his dame,
His spear and buckler seizing, wheel'd his steed,
And on Marphisa rush'd with wrathful speed.

Her mighty spear in rest Marphisa held,

And full on Pinabello's helm impell'd 1160

The forceful stroke that hurl'd him to the plain,
Where stunn'd he lay, as number'd with the slain.

At length he rose; when, victor of the day,

Marphisa from the stranger rent away

Her glittering ornaments and youthful vest, 1165

And with the spoils her aged beldame dress'd;

Then on the palfrey plac'd, which late before,

With other grace, the haughty damsel bore.

No more the victim of her tender passions;
 But gave himself to duty and to love;
 In which, amidst the blissful hours,
 My partner still with thee I spent the time.
 Of beauty's bloom—then came the day
 To crown the proof, and seal the terms of love.
 That is a crown which never fades the hair,
 The daisy should not yet be withered;
 The Pheasant, tamed by love of man,
 To keep the challenge and defend the claim,
 His spear and buckler bring, when'd his need.
 And on his shield he sets a warrior's pride.
 Her mighty spear he sets in his hand,
 And takes her Pheasant's place in his hand.
 The forest flock that he led him to the plain,
 Where hunt he lay, as number'd with the slain.
 At length he took, when victor of the day,
 His Pheasant from the hunter's way.
 Her shining ornaments and youthful self,
 And with the spoils her aged belov'd self,
 Turn on the palfrey plac'd, which late before,
 With other grace, the hungry dandel bore.
 And now, on his Pheasant's back,
 End of the winter book.

THE
TENTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.

THE ARGUMENT.

ASTOLPHO having left the land of the Amazons, arrives at the enchanted palace of Atlantes, where Rogero, Bradamant, and many other knights were detained. By the help of his horn and book, he destroys the enchantment, and sets the prisoners at liberty : he takes possession of the griffin-horse. Rogero and Bradamant meet and know each other. They depart together in their way to Vallombrosa, where Rogero had engaged to be baptized, promising afterwards to demand Bradamant in marriage of her kindred. They are stopped at a castle, where Rogero jousts with four knights, who were sworn to defend a law which Pinabello had made to spoil all strangers who passed that way. Death of Pinabello. Rogero is parted from Bradamant : he casts his enchanted shield into a well. Bradamant loses herself in a wood, and is met by Astolpho, who, preparing to take his flight, entrusts her with the care of his horse and arms. Bradamant goes to Mount Albano, sends a messenger to Rogero with his horse, which is afterwards taken by Rodomont. Marphisa meets and jousts with Zerbino.



THE
TENTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.

A STOLPHO now, amidst th' inhuman band
 Of warlike females, clear'd the hostile land;
 While his pale friends their ready canvas spread,
 And from the shore disgrac'd and trembling fled.
 At length the noble knight those climes forsook, 5
 And to Armenia's realm his journey took.
 Some days elaps'd, he hasten'd to survey
 Natolia, then to Brusia held his way;
 Till coursing on beyond the midland tide,
 He enter'd Thrace; by Danube's flowery side 10
 His rapid progress through Hungaria held:
 Then, as if wings his courser's speed impell'd,
 He pass'd Moravia and Bohemia's land,
 And where the Rhine o'erflows Franconia's strand;

At Flanders then embark'd, where favouring gales 15
So fill'd the freighted vessel's flying sails,
Ere long he touch'd on England's friendly shore,
And gain'd the welcome port at noontide hour.

He press'd his steed, and reach'd with eager haste
Fair London's towers ere eve her shadows cast; 20
There heard that many a month its course had run
Since aged Otho lay in Paris' town:
Again he mounts the bark, light zephyr sweeps
The vessel's deck, and scarcely curls the deeps;
But now, by slow degrees, increasing blows, 25
And soon, beyond the pilot's wishes, grows
So near a storm, as claims his skilful care,
The conflict of the dashing waves to bear.
High o'er the furrow'd sea, before the wind,
The bark is driven, and quits her course design'd: 30
Near Roan, at last, she anchor'd on the strand:
Astolpho, when he trod the wish'd-for land,
On Rabicano's back the saddle plac'd;
His limbs the mail, his side the falchion grac'd;
He grasp'd his fearful horn, a surer aid 35
Than marshall'd bands in glittering arms array'd.

Now passing through a wood, he reach'd a hill
Whose foot was moisten'd by a crystal rill;

What

What time the flocks to crop the mead forbear,
And to the fold or mountain cave repair. 40

With burning heat, with parching thirst distrest,
The helm unlac'd, whose weight his brows opprest'd,
Amid the brakes his fiery steed he ty'd;
Then to the stream, for cooling draughts, apply'd
His eager lips; but ere his lips essay'd 45
The moistening liquid, from the neighbouring shade
A seeming rustic swift his courser took,
Leapt on his back, and turn'd him from the brook.

Astolpho, rousing at the noise, perceives
Th' insulting outrage, and the fountain leaves. 50
Resentment soon the place of thirst supplies,
And swift he follows as the caitiff flies.
The caitiff led him on in doubtful chace,
Now check'd, and now impell'd his courser's pace.
At length (pursuing one, and one pursu'd) 55
They left the forest, and the palace view'd,
Where magic spells, without a prison, hold
In lasting durance many a baron bold.

The rustic to the palace drives the steed,
Light as the wind, and like the wind in speed. 60
Astolpho, in his plated arms confin'd,
With heavy shield encumber'd, lags behind;

Till now arriving, he beholds no more
The hind and courser he pursu'd before ;
Then calls to mind the book that to his hand 65
Sage Logistilla gave in India's land :
There full describ'd was all the costly pile,
Each strange enchantment, and each secret guile ;
What means the foul magician's arts would quell,
And free his prisoners from the potent spell. 70
Beneath the threshold plac'd, a demon rais'd
The various wonders that the sense amaz'd.
The stone remov'd, where clos'd the spirit lay,
The palace walls would melt in smoke away.
The Paladin advanc'd, with fearless pace, 75
To lift the ponderous marble from its base.
Soon as Atlantes saw his hands prepar'd
To set at large the castle's fatal guard,
By magic art, he gives the gentle knight
A different shape to each beholder's sight : 80
By this, a hind ; by this, a giant seen ;
By that, a warrior of ill-favour'd mien ;
While each in him th' illusive image view'd,
For which he late Atlantes' steps pursu'd.
Impatient to retrieve their honours stain'd, 85
All turn'd on him—a fierce determin'd band !

Rogero,

Rogero, Bradamant, Gradasso there,
 Iroldo, Brandimart in arms, prepare,
 With brave Prasildo, by the spell misled,
 To wreak their vengeance on Aftolpho's head: 90
 But, mindful of his horn, he soon deprefs'd,
 With chilling terror, every haughty crest.
 In happy time the fear-dispensing breath
 Preserv'd the Paladin from instant death.
 Soon as his lips have touch'd the narrow vent, 95
 And wide around the deafening clangor sent,
 Like trembling doves, when through the breaking
 skies

Resounds the gun, each knight affrighted flies:
 Not less th' enchanter old * the noise receives;
 Not less amaz'd the wondrous dome he leaves, 100
 To distance flies, heart-struck with deep dismay,
 Till, dying off, the dreadful sounds decay.
 The keeper * and his prisoners quit the walls;
 And numerous steeds with these forsake their stalls,
 Even Rabican had fled, but with his hand 105
 Aftolpho, as he pass'd, the steed detain'd.

And now th' intrepid duke (the forcerer gone)
 From off the threshold heav'd a weighty stone.

* ATLANTES.

An image there he found, with many a spell
Of hidden force, that boots not here to tell. 110

Eager to quell the charm, with frequent stroke,
The knight each mystic sign and figure broke,
(For so the book, his sure instructor, shew'd)

And all the palace vanish'd in a cloud.

Held by a chain of beaten gold, he view'd 115

Where good Rogero's winged courser stood;

That winged courser which the wizard * Moor

Dispatch'd to bear him to Alcina's shore;

That burst his reins, when, help'd by magic flight,

Albracca's princess † vanish'd from the knight, 120

And left him whelm'd in shame—with rapid speed

Back to his lord return'd the faithful steed,

Wondrous to see! and stabled there remain'd,

Till the strong spell no more its power retain'd.

No chance than this could yield sincerer joy 125

To good Astolpho, who resolv'd to employ

Th' occasion given new regions to explore,

Oceans and realms by him unseen before.

The thought of Rabicano yet detain'd

The knight, and yet awhile his flight restrain'd. 130

Well had he cause to hold the courser dear;

None better in the list with levell'd spear

* ATLANTES.

† ANGELICA.

Could run at tilt : with him to Gallia's land
He travell'd safe from Egypt's burning sand.

Debating long, Astolpho now decreed, 135
With some well-chosen friend to entrust the steed,
Rather than leave him an valu'd prey,
For him whom Fortune led to pass the way.

Amidst the captives, who, by guile detain'd
In old Atlantes' magic walls remain'd, 140
With noble Bradamant, Rogero found
The spell dissolv'd that long their senses bound.

The lovers saw, what, ne'er till then reveal'd,
Atlantes' power from either long conceal'd :
Such mists of darkness o'er their sight he drew, 145
That neither, till that hour, the other knew.

On Bradamant Rogero fix'd his eyes ;
She on Rogero gaz'd with like surprise.
Now round her waist his eager arms he throws,
Her blushes kindling like the maiden rose, 150
While from her lips each balmy sweet he proves,
The blossoms of his first auspicious loves !

A thousand times th' enraptur'd lovers meet
In fond embrace ; a thousand times repeat
Their mutual vows, while scarce their breasts contain
The joy that throbs in every glowing vein. 156

Yet

Yet much they sorrow'd, that by magic flight,
They liv'd so long estrang'd from either's sight,
And lost so many days of dear delight. }

While Bradamant such favour'd grace bestows, 160
As the chaste maid to chaste affection owes,
She tells Rogero, would he hope to prove
The last dear blessings of connubial love,
He from her father Amon (ere the bands
Of sacred Hymen join their plighted hands) 165
Must gain consent, and in the hallow'd wave
With Christian rites his Pagan errors lave.

Rogero, for his dearest mistress' sake,
Not only yields a Christian's name to take,
Which once his father and his uncle bore, 170
Which all his ancestors profess'd before;
But vows, for her, in every chance to give
The remnant years Heaven doom'd him yet to live.

Then first to be baptiz'd, and next to wed,
Rogero follow'd as the virgin led: 175
Tow'rs Vallombrosa went the martial dame,
That to an ancient abbey gave the name,
Wealthy and fair, in hallow'd rituals blest,
And courteous to receive the stranger-guest.

Athwart

Athwart their way a stately castle stands, 180
Which Pinabello, Pontier's earl, commands;
Who late an impious law unjustly fram'd,
That many a knight and many a damsel sham'd:
Him from his seat to earth Marphisa struck,
And from his dame her steed and vesture took. 185
The dame dismounted (whom with rancorous mind
In every evil Pinabello join'd),
Declar'd nor night nor day could rest afford,
No future hour behold her peace restor'd,
Unless a thousand dames and warriors foil'd 190
She view'd unhors'd, of vest and armour spoil'd.

It chanc'd that day to Pinabello came
Four noble knights, the first in martial fame:
Young Sanfonetto; Guido, Savage nam'd;
Gryphon and Aquilant, the brethren fam'd; 195
Who with Marphisa late, to knighthood's scorn,
With terror fled Astolpho's spelful horn.
These Pinabello at his gate receives
With semblance fair, and courteous welcome gives.
At night, when sleep has lull'd each sense to peace,
He binds the four, nor will their bonds release, 201
Till all consenting, as his laws prescribe,
A year and day to dwell amidst his tribe,

Shall

Shall swear from knights their steeds and arms to wrest,
And from the damsels take their steeds and vest. 205
'Tis fix'd, that he who first with single force,
Shall pass the bridge, alone must run the course:
But should such lance against the stranger fail,
The rest united must his strength assail.

And now in sweet discourse th' affianc'd pair, 210
The fearless warrior, and the martial fair,
Not past three miles their pleasing way pursu'd,
When now the castle's bridge and gates they view'd,
Where arms and vests are left, where valu'd life
Is put to hazard in the dangerous strife. 215
The ready warder, on the ramparts plac'd,
Twice rung the warning—when, behold! in haste,
On a low steed an ancient fire appear'd,
And, as he came, his voice before was heard.

Hold, strangers, hold! (he thus began to say) 220
Here stop, and here the fine exacted pay:
If yet you know not—let me now reveal
Our law—and then he fought their law to tell.

Rogero cut him short—Forbear to show,
In fruitless prelude, what prepar'd we know. 225
No more—I come to prove, if what my will
Aspires to act, my actions can fulfil.

Arms,

Arms, steed, and vest, I ne'er to others yield
 For empty threatenings in an untry'd field;
 And well I trust, for sounding words alone, 230
 My partner never will resign his own.
 But give me to behold them face to face,
 Whose strength must purchase, to my foul disgrace,
 My arms and steed—o'er yonder hill we haste,
 Nor longer here the precious hours can waste. 235

To whom the fire—Lo! issuing to the plain
 One warrior comes—nor were his words in vain.
 High on the bridge appear'd a noble knight,
 In crimson surcoat deck'd with flowers of white.
 Now Bradamant Rogero fu'd to trust 240
 With her the first fair honours of the joust,
 From his high seat to hurl the knight, who wore
 The mantle red, with flowers embroider'd o'er.
 In vain she fu'd, Rogero this deny'd:
 Constrain'd to yield, she silent stood beside 245
 To view the course, while on himself her knight
 Took all the hazard of the dubious fight.
 Rogero then enquir'd the warrior's name,
 Who foremost from the castle's portal came.
 'Tis Sanfonetto (thus the fire reply'd) 250
 I know th' embroider'd scarf with crimson dy'd.

Now Pinabello issu'd from the gate,
And round their lord his thronging menials wait,
All well prepar'd of arms and steeds to spoil
The hapless knights that fell within the toil. 255

Swift to the course each hardy champion press'd,
And firmly held his ponderous spear in rest,
Huge, knotty, long, in native forests bred,
The tough ash ending in a steely head.

Now here, now there, impatient of delay, 260
Each silent wheels his steed a different way :
Then turning swift, with levell'd spears, they meet,
The field wide-shaking to their coursers' feet.

Against their shields unerring aim they took :
Rogero's shield receiv'd, unhurt, the stroke : 265
Atlantes' buckler, whose enchanted light
With powerful splendor clos'd the gazer's sight.

Not so the adverse shield, whose mortal mold
Could not against the furious tourney hold.

As with a thunder-bolt the spear impell'd, 270
Reach'd the stunn'd arm that scarce the buckler held,
And Sanfonetto, with a grievous wound
Forc'd from his seat, fell headlong to the ground.

Again the warder rings th' alarm, and calls
The remnant three to quit the castle walls. 275

In

In luckless hour, lo! Pinabello came
 To learn of Bradamant the champion's name
 Who from his warrior won the wreath of fame.
 Eternal Heaven, to give his crimes the meed
 They well deserv'd, conducts him on the steed 280
 Which, scarce eight months elaps'd, the wretch be-
 fore

From Bradamant, by murderous treason, bore:
 What time the shatter'd pole receiv'd her weight,
 And Heaven reserv'd her for a happier fate.

The generous heroine * with a nearer view 285
 Her courser saw, and soon the traitor knew;
 At once she threatens—to the sword applies
 Her eager hand, and on the caitiff flies.

Between his castle and the recreant knight
 She cuts off all retreat, nor can his flight 290
 Avail to reach the gate; as to his den
 The fox retires beset by dogs and men:
 Defenceless, pale, before the martial maid,

He seeks, with coward cries, the woodland shade:
 With trembling heart he spurs his rapid steed, 295
 And hopes alone for safety from his speed.

The Dordan dame pursues, with all the zeal
 Of just revenge, and whirls her fatal steel;

* BRADAMANT.

Now

Now at his side or bosom aims the wound :
The tumult echoes, and the woods resound. 300

But at the castle Pinabello's crew
Nor heard his clamours, nor his danger knew :
There every eye was fix'd, there every sense
Rogero's conflict held in deep suspense.

And now the three remaining champions came 305
From forth the fort ; with these the vengeful dame
Who fram'd that base device ; while every knight
Blush'd with a single foe to wage the fight ;
And rather wish'd to die, in fame unstain'd,
Than meet a conquest so ignobly gain'd. 310

If here my single weapon can suffice,
To unhorse yon' warrior (Savage Guido cries)
Thus shall I joust !—be mine the single strife,
And if I fail—exact my forfeit life.

Gryphon and Aquilant alike demand 315

To meet the warlike stranger hand to hand.
To these th' imperious dame—Why thus delay
In vain debate the business of the day ?

I brought you here yon' champion's arms to take,
Not other compacts, other laws, to make. 320

Why urge not pleas like this, ere yet ye swore
To observe my will, when first within my power ;

Not

Not when th' occasion calls you to maintain
Your promise given, nor make that promise vain?

Thus they—Behold (Roger eager cries) 325
I stand prepar'd—if still you seek the prize
Of armour, steed, or vest, why this delay
To seize with valiant force the offer'd prey?

The matron there impels each tardy knight;
Here storms Roger, and demands the fight. 330
Compell'd at length, though fill'd with generous rage,
All rush at once the stranger to engage.
First rode the brother chiefs *, of generous race,
Then Guido Savage came with heavier pace;
Roger with the spear to combat drew, 335
The spear that Sansonetto late o'erthrew:
His nervous arm the blazing buckler bore,
Which in Pyrené's hills Atlantes wore.

At Gryphon now Roger aim'd the thrust
Above the buckler's verge—the furious joust 340
His helm confess'd; on either hand he reel'd,
Till, falling from his steed, he press'd the field.
But ere he fell, his spear with hissing sound
Glanc'd on the polish'd orb's impassive round;

* GRYPHON and AQUILANT.

The veil it rent, and freed the magic rays: 345

Advancing Aquilant receiv'd the blaze;

On Guido Savage next, who came the last,

The wondrous targe its beamy splendor cast.

All fell—but little yet Rogero knew

The finish'd joust, and swift his falchion drew; 350

Then wheel'd his steed, when on the ground he
view'd

His senseless foes with little force subdu'd;

Knights, squires, and each that issu'd to the plain,

The numerous foot, and all the female train:

Till, casting down a casual glance, he spy'd 355

From his left arm, dependent at his side,

The veil that still was wont the light to hide.

Rogero's features flush'd with rosy shame,

His down-cast looks his secret thoughts proclaim;

Where shall I turn? (he cries) how cleanse away 360

The infamy of this ill-omen'd day?

The triumph here achiev'd each tongue shall tell,

Not due to valour, but to magic spell.

He said; and speaking, miss'd with anxious care,

His bosom's best belov'd, the Dordan fair*; 365

* BRADAMANT.

Then

Then sad and pensive for her loss, he stray'd
 With doubtful search through valley, plain and shade,
 Till in a wood's sequester'd gloom he found,
 A crystal well, low sunk beneath the ground:
 Hither, when fated herds their food forsake, 370
 Oppress'd with heat they came their thirst to slake.
 Rogero then—No more shall scorn or blame,
 From thee, O shield! arise to taint my name:
 No longer mine—I here such arms forego,
 Nor more to thee will shameful conquest owe. 375
 Thus he; and swift alighting as he spoke,
 With generous wrath a craggy stone he took;
 To this the buckler, well-secur'd, he ty'd,
 And to the well consign'd—Lie there (he cry'd)
 And with thee there my foul dishonour hide. 380

Deep was the well, and high the waters swell'd,
 Ponderous the stone, and ponderous was the shield:
 At once it sunk, a bed the bottom gave,
 And sudden o'er it clos'd the limpid wave. 384
 Soon Fame divulg'd the deed, with trumpet's sound,
 Thro' France, thro' Spain, thro' every region round;
 From tongue to tongue it spread, and many a train
 Of noble knights aspir'd the prize to gain;

And vainly search'd the forest, where, conceal'd
From human sight, remain'd the precious shield. 390

Far in a vale, with gloomy woods confin'd,
The martial dame * the recreant warrior † join'd;
Where, in his panting breast and bleeding side,
A hundred times the vengeful blade she dy'd;
And from its seat the hateful spirit chac'd, 395
Whose impious deeds had all the land disgrac'd.

Then with that steed, which late with guileful art
The traitor took, she hasten'd to depart

And find her knight, but now explor'd in vain
Her former way, and rov'd o'er hill and plain : 400

For envious Fortune through the dreary shade,
By winding paths, her wandering steed convey'd;
And to the woodland's deep recesses led,
What time, at sun-set, eve her shadows spread.

Unknowing where th' approaching night to pass, 405

She checks her reins, and on the verdant grass,

Beneath the covering trees, her limbs she throws,

To cheat the tedious hours with short repose;

Now watches Venus, Saturn, Mars, or Jove,

With every wandering star that shines above : 410

* BRADAMANT.

† PINABELLO.

But

But from her sleeping sense, or waking mind,
Her dear Rogero never is disjoin'd.
She sighs to think revenge her soul could move
Beyond the softer claims of faithful love.
Insenate rage has fever'd me (she cries) 415
From all I hold most dear—Unheeding eyes!
That when I first my treacherous foe pursu'd,
Mark'd not the tracks of this perplexing wood:
Then had I known in safety to return,
Nor here been lost, dejected and forlorn. 420

In words like these she mourns without relief;
And now she broods in silence o'er her grief;
While winds of sighs, and floods of tears, that shake
Her gentle breast, a cruel tempest make.
At length the long-expected morn appears, 425
When streaky light the grey horizon cheers:
She takes her steed, that graz'd beside the way,
And, mounting, turns to meet the rising day.
Not far she pass'd, when issuing from the wood,
She came to where the wizard's palace stood. 430
Astolpho here she met, whose prowess gain'd
The griffin-steed, and but his flight restrain'd
For Rabicano's sake, till chance should give
Some trusty friend, his courser to receive.

The thoughtful Paladin his face display'd 435
Without his casque, when through the misty shade
The valiant Bradamant her kinsman knew,
And, greeting fair, impatient nearer drew ;
Declar'd her name, her covering helm unlac'd,
Reveal'd her features, and the knight embrac'd. 440

Their greeting done—Too long I here delay
My purpos'd voyage through a trackless way,
(Aftolpho cry'd)—then to the maid he told
His flight design'd, and bade his steed behold.
She saw—the tear stood trembling in her eye, 445
And from her bosom heav'd a gentle sigh,
That dangerous day recall'd, on which she view'd
The parting pinions, and his course pursu'd
With sharpen'd fight, when, soaring to the skies,
He bore Rogero from her longing eyes. 450

Aftolpho tells, that to her friendly care,
He Rabicano gives, beyond compare
First in the course, whose swiftness leaves behind
The arrow parting on the wings of wind.
To Bradamant he gave the golden lance, 455
Which once the son of Galaphron to France
From India brought, whose hidden power was such,
To unhorse each champion with its magic touch.

Aftolpho

Astolpho now bestrode the winged horse,
And slowly through the air impell'd his course, 460
Till Bradamant, who watch'd his upward flight,
All in a moment lost him from her sight.
So from the port the guiding pilot steers,
Who dangerous sands and rocky shallows fears;
But when he leaves the rocks and sands behind, 465
He shifts each sail, and scuds before the wind.

And now, with fond desire, the virgin burn'd
To see Rogero, in his absence mourn'd,
Whom (yet deny'd to meet) her anxious mind
At least in Vallombrosa hop'd to find. 470

Debating thus she stood in pensive mood,
At length a peasant drawing near she view'd,
And him she bade Astolpho's armour take,
And place the weight on Rabiçano's back;
Then lead the courser, which the burden bore, 475
With that which Pinabello rode before.
To Vallombrosa now she sought the way,
But doubtful of the track, she fear'd to stray
From where she wish'd; nor knew the peasant well
The country round; and thus, as chance besel, 480
A path she took, and through the forest wide
She wander'd long, without a certain guide.

At noontide hour she left the covert shade,
 And on a hill a castle near survey'd
 Of stately scite; the damsel at the view 485
 Full well the walls of Mount Albano knew:
 These, when she saw, a sudden dread oppress'd
 Her heart, that flutter'd in her tender breast,
 Her coming known, she fear'd the pressing train
 Of friends and kindred would her steps detain, 490
 Where she, a prey to love's consuming fire,
 Might view no more the lord of her desire;
 No more at Vallombrosa hope to meet
 Her dear Rogero, and their vows complete.

While various thoughts the martial dame resolv'd,
 Nor this, nor that, her anxious mind resolv'd, 496
 She on Alardo sudden chanc'd to light,
 And fought in vain to elude her brother's sight.

This youth had station'd many a warlike band
 Of horse and foot, which, at the king's command, }
 He lately rais'd from all the neighbouring land. 501 }
 Return'd, he chanc'd his sister here to meet:
 With seeming joy the pair each other greet;
 And now, in friendly converse, side by side,
 Together join'd, to Mount Albano ride. 505

Thus

'Thus to her native seats the fair return'd,
Where Beatrice had long her absence mourn'd.
But what are all the joys she here may prove,
Her mother's fondness, or her brethren's love,
Compar'd to happiness so late possess'd, 510
When lov'd Rogero clasp'd her to his breast!

Herself restrain'd, she purpos'd one should bear
To Vallombrosa, with a faithful care,
Her greetings kind; with these his generous steed
She meant to send, which, fam'd for strength and
speed, 515

Rogero priz'd; for through the Pagan lands,
No steed so fam'd obeys a master's hands.

When good Rogero on the winged horse
Was borne aloft, a strange and fearful course,
He left Frontino, which the martial dame 520
Receiv'd in trust (Frontino was his name),
And sent to Mount Albano, where, at large,
Wanton he rov'd, or fed beneath her charge
In plenteous stalls; or when he felt the rein,
Was gently pac'd along the level plain: 525
Thus, pamper'd high in ease, and nurs'd with care,
His shining skin more sleek, more noble seem'd his
air,

And

And now she urg'd her virgins to divide
The pleasing task : each virgin soon apply'd
Her ready skill, and wrought, of golden thread, 530
A costly net, which o'er a pall they spread
Of finest silk, and on the courser plac'd,
With trappings gay, and rich embroidery grac'd.
A maid she chose, of long-experienc'd truth,
Whose mother, Callitrephia, nurs'd her youth 535
From infant years : to whom she oft confess'd
The love that long had sway'd her gentle breast.

To her she spoke—Whom sooner shall I trust
Than thee, Hippalca dear, discreet and just ?
In whom, like thee, of all my train (she cry'd), 540
Can I the message of my heart confide ?
Then to her listening maid she told at large,
To him (her bosom's lord) the tender charge.

And now she bade Hippalca mount her steed,
And by the golden reins Frontino lead : 545
But should she, in her travel, chance to find
A wretch so senseless, or so base of mind,
To seize the steed, she will'd her but to tell
The courser's lord, his folly to repel :
For every knight she deem'd, whate'er his fame 550
In arms, must tremble at Rogero's name,

For ten long miles the dame her journey held,
Through beaten path, thick wood, or open field:
One noon of day, descending from a height,
As on a narrow pass she chanc'd to light 555
Stony and rough, fierce Rodomont she view'd,
Who arm'd, on foot a guiding dwarf pursu'd,
That from the banks of Seine the warrior led,
To wreak his vengeance on the Tartar's head,
Who durst with daring arms his right invade, 560
In Doralis, Granada's peerless maid.

The Pagan on Hippalca cast his eye,
And loud blasphem'd th' eternal Hierarchy,
To find a steed so stately and so fair,
Without his lord, beneath a damsel's care. 565
With eager looks he stood, and, gazing, cry'd,
Why art thou here without thy warlike guide?

O! were he here (Hippalca said) thy mind
Would soon forego the purpose it design'd:
Who this bestrides, excels thy arms in fight, 570
And through the world scarce breathes so brave a
knight.

What chief (return'd the Moor) thus treads the fame
Of others down?—Rogero (said the dame).

Then he—The steed I mine can nobly make,
Which from Rogero fam'd in arms I take; 575

And

And should he seek his courser to regain,
I here defy him to the martial plain.
The weapon's choice be his—this prize I claim—
War is my sport, and Rodomont my name!
I shine by my own light, and mark my course 580
With tracks more fatal than the thunder's force.

Thus he; and turning, as these words he said,
The golden bridle o'er Frontino's head,
Leap'd in the seat, and sudden left behind,
Hippalca weeping with distressful mind. 585

Three days Marphisa with that aged crone,
For whom was Pinabello late o'erthrown,
Had journey'd on, yet no adventure fell
In length of travel, worthy here to tell.
The fourth, they met a knight, who, bent on speed,
With goring rowels urg'd his flying steed; 591
The prince Zerbino, who, incens'd, pursu'd
The wretch whose weapon shed Medoro's blood;
Who knew so well to wind each tangled brake,
So well th' advantage of the ground to take, 595
He 'scap'd pursuit, by woods conceal'd, and veil'd
In misty vapours by the morn exhal'd.

Though ill-dispos'd, Zerbino could not hold
From laughter, when he view'd the beldame old,

Whose

Whose youthful habit seem'd so ill to grace 600

Her doating age, and wither'd homely face.

Then to Marphisa, prancing at her side :

Thy prudence merits praise, Sir Knight (he cry'd)

That choosing for thy mate so fair a dame,

Thou need'st not fear a rival in thy flame. 605

The noble maid, here feigning wrath, to try

What haply might ensue, made this reply.

She whom I guard, I swear by Heaven, has more

Of beauty's claim, than thou of courteous lore.

Thou seem'st to her transcendent graces blind, 610

To veil the baseness of thy dastard mind.

What other knight that here should chance to meet

A maid so young, in every charm complete,

By one defended, but his strength would prove

To win in her the sweet reward of love? 615

So well with thee she suits (Zerbino cries),

'Twere much injustice to dispute the prize ;

Nor shall I, lost to sense, my arms employ

In such a cause—thou, what thou hast, enjoy.

Homely or fair, with thee she shall abide, 620

Nor will I love, so aptly pair'd, divide :

Heaven knows you both are join'd beyond compare,

If thou art valiant as the nymph is fair.

Marphisa

Marphisa then return'd—In thy despite,
To win this damsel must thou prove the fight: 625
Ne'er shalt thou view her beauties with desire,
And not to win those peerless charms aspire.

I know not who (Zerbino made reply)
For such a conquest would the combat try;
Where courting danger with unfruitful pains, 630
The victor loses while the vanquish'd gains.

Since terms like these displease thee, hear me make
Another offer which thou well may'st take,
(Marphisa answer'd) if in joust to thine
My arms submit, this dame shall still be mine; 635
But, if I conquer, her thou shalt receive;
Thus be our trial, who the dame shall leave.
Should Fortune bid thee now resign the day,
'Tis thine to guard her as she points the way.

Agreed—Zerbino said, and speaking, wheel'd 640
His rapid courser to dispute the field:
Firm on his stirrups, with collected might,
He stood; and, to direct his spear aright,
Against her buckler drove the pointed wood;
Which, like a mount of steel, the shock withstood;
While she, with mightier force, his helmet found, 646
And instant hurl'd him senseless to the ground.

High-

High-seated on her steed, the conquering maid
Turn'd with a smile—Accept my gift (she said);
The more I see the dame in beauty shine, 650
It joys me more to see such beauty thine.
Thou, in my place, her champion's charge sustain,
Nor let thy faith, so lately pledg'd, be vain.

She stay'd not for reply, but left the knight,
And soon the forest shut her from his sight. 655

Then to the crone he spoke (for sure he deem'd
His conquering foe a warrior as she seem'd)
Give me to hear what chief has stain'd my fame?
The beldame answer'd, eager to proclaim
What known would deeper wound the noble knight,
Thou fall'st (she cry'd) beneath a virgin's might; 661
Who now from eastern realms, with sword and lance,
Is come to prove the Paladins of France.

At this, Zerbino's soul indignant glow'd,
While o'er his visage flush'd the changing blood; 665
Thro' all his frame the deep contagion spread,
And ev'n his armour seem'd to blush with red.
Remounting on his steed, he curs'd in vain
The nerves that could not late his seat maintain.
The hag in secret simil'd, and every art 670
Of malice try'd to afflict his generous heart

With

With cruel taunts, and bade him call to mind
That chance had now to hers his will resign'd.

Zerbino heard abash'd, nor aught reply'd,
Constrain'd the worst, like weary steed, to abide, 675
That feels the bit in mouth, and rowels at his side. }

In frequent sighs he gave his anguish vent:
What dire reverse (he cry'd) has fortune sent!
While she, the first in virtue as in charms,
Untimely torn from these desiring arms, 680
Is dash'd on rocks, or given the precious food
Of ravenous fish and fowls that haunt the flood;
Lo! her, that buried in her earthy bed,
Should long ere this the hungry worms have fed,
Thou now preserv'st beyond her loathsome date, 685
To add new torments to my wretched state.

Thus he; but when his loathsome partner heard
These words, in bitterness of soul preferr'd,
She found 'twas he, who, by report misled,
His dearest Isabella mourn'd as dead, 690
The fair who, captive in the outlaw's cell,
On lost Zerbino's virtues lov'd to dwell;
Who oft rehears'd her mournful story o'er,
How first she left her dear paternal shore,
Then, shipwreck'd on the seas and shelly strand, 695
Preserv'd her life in Rochelle's welcome land.

Zerbino

Zerbino known, the hag, with impious spite,
To exclude all gleam of comfort from the knight,
What best might raise his hope still kept conceal'd,
And what would give him pain alone reveal'd. 700

Hear thou (she cry'd) from whom I thus have borne
Such haughty carriage, such insulting scorn,
Didst thou but think what tidings I could tell
Of her on whom thy fond affections dwell,
How might'st thou speak me fair—but all in vain 705
Would force or soothing now that secret gain,
Which, had thy speech more gentle manners shown,
Thou might'st, perchance, discourteous youth, have
known.

As the grim mastiff, who with fury threatens
Th' invading robber, soon his rage forgets,
Whene'er by scent of savoury meat allur'd,
Or lull'd with spells by magic art procur'd;
Thus soon Zerbino, with a soften'd air,
Besought the hag with tears and humble prayer,
By Gods and men, no longer to conceal, 715
But every good or evil chance reveal.

Nought canst thou know, that known would yield
delight

(Th' unfeeling beldame answer'd to the knight);

She lives, whom now as dead thy sighs deplore,
But lives to envy those who live no more. 720
Full twenty, not by laws nor faith restrain'd,
Thy Isabella long in bonds detain'd:
Then think, should fate restore her to thy arms,
What hope remains to enjoy her virgin charms.

Ah! hag accurs'd! (Zerbino made reply) 725
How hast thou fram'd a foul detested lie!
Though twenty might the captive fair detain,
Not one would dare her spotless honour stain.

Thus he—then question'd when and where she
view'd

His best belov'd; but she, in fullen mood, 730
Was mute; determin'd to disclose no more,
Nor add a word to what she told before.
Zerbino mildly first his speech address'd,
Then held his threatening weapon to her breast.
Alike in vain his prayer, his menace prov'd, 735
Nor prayer, nor threat, the stubborn beldame mov'd.

END OF THE TENTH BOOK.

THE
ELEVENTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.

THE ARGUMENT.

ZERBINO, to defend Gabrina, engages in single combat with Hermonides, from whom he hears the particulars of her wicked life. Travelling afterwards with Gabrina, he finds the dead body of Pinabello, who had been slain by Bradamant. He is accused of the murder by Gabrina, and led to be put to death. The arrival of Orlando and Isabella, who had journeyed together since the deliverance of the latter from the outlaw's cave. Zerbino is saved from death by Orlando. Meeting of the two lovers. Mandricardo overtakes Orlando: their combat. Orlando, parting from Zerbino and Isabella, comes to the grotto where Angelica and Medoro used to meet. The manner in which he discovers the whole story of their love, which discovery ends in the total loss of his senses.



THE
ELEVENTH BOOK

OF
ORLANDO.

THUS journey'd they, till from the western hills
The setting sun display'd his hindmoſt wheels,
When, near advancing, with a fearleſs look,
A wandering warrior on their ſilence broke.
Well was he noted by the hateful dame,
Hermonides of Holland was his name;
Who bore athwart, depicted on his ſhield,
A band vermilion in a ſable field.
By features chang'd the crone her fears expreſs'd,
And to the prince her humble ſpeech addreſs'd.
She bade him ſtill in mind his promiſe bear
To her, who plac'd her in his guardian care;
For he, the knight, who met them face to face,
Was foe to her, and foe to all her race:

Her dear-lov'd father perish'd by his guilt; 15
By him her only brother's blood was spilt;
And still he fought, with more than ruthless mind,
To glut his rage on all her wretched kind.
Woman! in me behold thy champion near,
(Zerbino cry'd) and banish every fear. 20
When now, with heedful eyes, th' approaching
knight
Beheld that face, so odious to his sight,
Prepare with me in single fight to meet,
(Aloud he threatening cry'd with generous heat)
Or quit yon' female's side, and by my hand 25
Give her to perish, as her crimes demand:
If thou defend'st her cause, thou must be slain,
For thus it falls to those who wrong maintain.
Zerbino then with courteous speech reply'd,
Such thoughts could only with the base reside; 30
Yet if he press'd the fight, he should not find
A flying foe; but will'd him first in mind
To ponder, how a knight of gentle strain,
In helpless woman's blood his hand could stain.
These words, and many more, in vain ensu'd; 35
For deeds at length the contest must conclude.
Now for the tilt they wheel around the plain,
Then, turning furious, meet with loosen'd rein.

Not

Not with such speed the whizzing rocket flies,
Dismiss'd with joy to burst in upper skies ; 40
As in the dreadful shock each fiery horse
Bore either champion to the headlong course,
Low aim'd Hermonides his spear, and try'd
Through the left flank his pointed wood to guide :
The feeble wood in crashing splinters broke, 45
And scarce the knight of Scotland felt the stroke,
Far different came his lance ; with force impell'd,
The targe it pierc'd, and in the shoulder held
Its raging way, through plate and mail it flew,
And on the plain Hermonides o'erthrew. 50

Zerbino deem'd him slain; with pitying haste
He lighted, and his glittering helm unlac'd.
At length, as from a trance, the wounded knight
Recovering, on Zerbino fix'd his sight
Awhile in silence, till in mournful strain
He said—It grieves me little to sustain
This shame from one, whom well his deeds bespeak
The flower of wandering knights that danger seek.
But much to suffer in her cause I grieve,
Whose murderous guile, accustom'd to deceive,
Could such a knight in her defence engage,
Whom ill it suits a strife like this to wage;

And

And if my spirits last (though much I fear
My strength may fail) a story shalt thou hear,
Which told, will prove how far her deeds disgrace 65
A woman's name, and all the human race.

My youthful brother, on his fame intent,
From Holland once, our native dwelling, went,
And to Heraclius soon a knight was made
(Heraclius, who the Grecian empire sway'd); 70
A baron's friendship in the court he prov'd,
And he no less the courteous baron lov'd;
Who kept, near Servia's lands, a lonely seat,
A guarded fortress and a calm retreat.

Argeo was his name, whose choice had led 75
Yon loathsome woman to his nuptial bed;
But she, more changeful than the wither'd leaves
Which autumn every year of sap bereaves,
Now sudden chac'd from her inconstant breast
The love her husband there had once possess'd; 80
And every art essay'd of loose desire,

To make my brother burn in lawless fire,
Not firmer, 'midst the northern blast, appears
A pine, the produce of a hundred years,
Than he, indignant, met the dame's request, 85
A dame, of every vice the fertile nest!

Meantime,

Meantime, as still befals a wandering knight,
Who danger seeks, on dangers oft to light;
It chanc'd my brother, on adventures bound,
Receiv'd in combat many a grievous wound. 90
Argeo's fort was near; no need to wait
For leave to enter at his friendly gate;
He came, as wont, with med'cine's lenient power,
And rest, his health and vigour to restore.
Argeo, on some secret purpose bent, 95
As need requir'd him, from the castle went:
His comfort then the welcome time embrac'd,
To tempt my brother with her suit unchaste:
But he, a loyal friend as virtuous youth,
Impatient to behold his spotless truth 100
So close beset, at length the choice pursues
To fly Argeo, and his friendship lose;
And dwell an outcast, where the shameless dame
Might never hear again his luckless name,
Hard was this fate—but harder to fulfil, 105
Against his duty, her ungovern'd will;
Or to her lord accuse a faithless wife,
Her lord, who priz'd her dearer than his life.
Still pale and feeble with his wounds, he took
His arms and courser, and the place forsook; 110
In

In willing exile from his friend he went,
But envious Fortune cross'd his good intent.
Lo! to his home the husband came, and found
His wife in floods of seeming sorrow drown'd,
With haggard features and dishevell'd hair: 115
Surpris'd, he question'd whence her deep despair,
Again, and yet again, her speech he would
To learn the cause, while she, in sullen mood,
Within her bosom schemes of malice bred,
To avenge her slighted flame on him who fled. 120

At length—Ah! wherefore should I seek (she cry'd)
The guilt, incurr'd when thou wert gone, to hide?
Though from the world the horror I disguise,
It ever naked to reflection lies!
Know then—thy friend, thy bosom friend, assail'd 125
My matron honour, and by force prevail'd:
Then dreading lest I should his crime recite,
The villain parted hence with speedy flight.

Thus she; and with these impious words address'd,
Against his friend, inflam'd her husband's breast: 130
Too easy of belief, Argeo flew
With arms and steed his victim to pursue;
Who, faint with scarce-heal'd wounds, in journey slow,
Pass'd pensive on, and little fear'd a foe.

Now,

Now, in a lonely shade, with eager rage, 135
The baron rush'd th' unequal fight to wage,
My hapless brother vain excuses fram'd;
Incens'd Argeo loud the combat claim'd,
The one was strong, with deep resentment mov'd;
The other weak, and much his friend he lov'd, 140
Philander then (so call th' unhappy youth,
The guiltless victim of unspotted truth)
Who such a foe with strength unequal found,
Was vanquish'd in the fight, and captive bound.
Forbid it, Heaven! tho' now to justice sway'd 145
By guilt so deep as thine (Argeo said)
I e'er should kill the man I held so dear,
The man I cherish'd once for faith sincere.
Let other punishment thy deeds attend,
Than death from him who call'd thee once his friend,
Thus he; and on a courser bade be plac'd 151
A rustic bier of branches interlac'd,
Half dead thereon the wretched youth was laid,
And to the castle's neighbouring walls convey'd,
Where, in the lone retreat, he lay confin'd, 155
The penance for his future life design'd.
But that abandon'd dame, insatiate, press'd
My brother still, and urg'd her foul request.

What

What more avails thy boasted truth (she cry'd),
Since my report has set that boast aside? 160
Behold the guerdon of thy mighty pains!
Of all thy rigour, lo! what fruit remains!
Thou dwell'st in durance, never hence to part,
Till pity soften thy obdurate heart:
But if thou yield'st—I some device will frame 165
To set thee free, and heal thy wounded fame.

Philander answer'd—Hope not to prevail;
Nor think Philander's faith shall ever fail;
Though now it meets such unexpected lot;
Howe'er the world my merits has forgot, 170
One Power above my innocence can see,
And, at his will, my soul from trouble free,
Even he, who now detests my hated name,
When life shall cease to warm this mortal frame,
May to my memory wrong'd at last be just, 175
And weep his dear companion laid in dust.

Thus oft the shameless woman strives to gain
Philander's love, as oft she strives in vain;
Each rack'd invention in her thought applies,
And ponders all her magazine of lies; 180
Till Fortune, friendly to the wicked, brought
The wish'd occasion, which she long had sought,

Between

Between her husband and a baron reign'd
A hatred, in their houses long maintain'd:
Morando was he call'd, surnam'd the Fair, 185
Who oft, Argeo absent, would repair
Within his castle gates, and every outrage dare.

Argeo, to entice him thither, feigns
A vow to visit Sion's hallow'd plains:

Thus went the fame, while to his wife was known 190
The truth entrusted to her faith alone.

At close of eve the castle he regain'd,
And every knight within the walls remain'd.

With arms and ensigns chang'd, at dawn of day,
Each morning to the woods he took his way. 195

Now here, now there, with heedful watch he fray'd
Around his castle, lurking in the shade,
To mark, if trusting to the well-form'd tale,
Morando durst, as wont, his walls assail.

All day abroad he roam'd, but when he view'd 200
The light extinguish'd in the briny flood,

He came, where station'd his return to wait,
His wife receiv'd him at a secret gate.

The fatal time she seiz'd, my brother found,
And with dire fraud her impious wishes crown'd; 205

While from her eyes, for ever brew'd at will,
She pour'd a shower of tears her breast to fill.

Where

Where shall I fly? (she cry'd) what succour claim
To guard my own, to guard my husband's fame?
Thou know'st Morando well—Argeo hence, 210
Scarce Gods or men can yield me now defence
Against the traitor, who, with many a bribe
And menace, has seduc'd my menial tribe.
The suit he once by distant message press'd,
He boldly now has face to face address'd; 215
So close address'd, I dread that future shame
And dire misfortune will attend my name:
And but I late, with more attentive ear,
Gently appear'd his amorous tale to hear,
His passion would have seiz'd, by open force, 220
What now he hopes to win by milder course.
I promis'd soon to yield—yet ne'er design'd
To keep what, made through fear, can never bind.
For this, in thee alone I trust for aid;
Unhelp'd by thee my honour is betray'd, 225
With my Argeo's—which, if truth may lie
In friendship's words, you once esteem'd so high.

There needs not this (Philander cries) to move
A spirit ever prompt the most to prove
For my Argeo's sake—thy wish explain— 230
The faith I once possess'd, I still retain.

Then

Then impious she—Thy weapon must destroy
The wretch who seeks to poison all my joy.
Morando will return when rising night
With murky shade obscures the setting light, 235
While, at a signal fix'd, prepar'd I wait
Unseen, to give him entrance at the gate.
Thee will I safe in secret ambush place,
Without a ray the friendly gloom to chase;
Till, urg'd by me his arms aside to lay, 240
He to thy justice falls an easy prey.

With cruelty unheard, the ruthless wife
Thus form'd the snare to entrap her husband's life:
If wife she may be call'd, or rather nam'd
A fiend, with more than fiend-like rage inflam'd. 245

When now the fatal night her shadows spread,
She to her room my wretched brother led;
There plac'd him with his arms and trusty sword,
Till home return'd the castle's absent lord.
All to her impious hopes in course beset; 250
'Tis rare but evil deeds succeed too well.
Philander view'd in him Argeo's foe,
And at his own Argeo aim'd the blow:
Speechless he fell; and bleeding as he lay,
Without a struggle groan'd his life away. 255

The husband thus dispatch'd, his murdering sword
My brother to Gabrina's hand restor'd.
Gabrina is her name, who every day
Is born to curse, and lives but to betray!
She who, till then, conceal'd the horrid truth, 260
With lighted torch approach'd th' unhappy youth,
And bade him view how well his arm had sped,
And show'd where lay his friend Argeo dead.
She menac'd then, unless his pliant will
The dictates of her hateful love fulfil, 265
In every part to make his trespass known,
Which all should tell, and he in vain disown.
So must he die, with guilt of murder stain'd,
A public victim to the hangman's hand.
She bade him ponder, though to die he dar'd, 270
If for a shameful death he stood prepar'd.

Philander, when his dire mistake he view'd,
Congeal'd with horror and amazement stood:
As when a ship, that in mid ocean sails,
Drives to and fro by two opposing gales: 275
Between two evils thus Philander prest,
Debating long, he fixes on the least:
Fate urges now the dreadful choice to make:
Though all her arts before could never shake

His

His constant faith ; the dread of death with shame
Compels him, while he loaths her impious flame, 281
To plight his vow to join with hers his hand,
When both had safely left the Grecian land.

Thus the foul forc'refs won his forc'd consent,
And with him closely from the castle went. 285
Again his home and friends Philander view'd,
But infamy in Greece his name pursu'd.
Still in his mind he bears, with thrilling pain,
His lov'd companion by his weapon slain ;
Deep, and more deep, grief work'd its canker'd way,
Till on his bed of sickness sad Philander lay. 291

The foul adultress, who his heart beheld
Still to her flame averse, indignant swell'd
To fierce resentment ; till her thoughts, estrang'd
From all her love, again to hatred chang'd : 295
And soon, as once against the baron's life,
Against my brother's wrought this implous wife,
From this bad world to send, with arts accurst,
The second husband, as she sent the first.

A leech she found, far better taught to kill 300
With poisonous, than with wholesome drugs to heal,
And him she drew, by hopes of vast reward,
With her infernal purpose to accord,

The strength of some envenom'd juice to prove,
And from her loathing sight her lord remove. 305

Join'd with myself, a mourning friendly band
Enclos'd his bed, when with the cup in hand
The leech approach'd, and said the drink he bore
Would soon my brother's wasted health restore.

Gabrina then, a witness to remove 310

Who knew th' effects of her detested love;

Perchance in avarice to withhold his gains,

The price agreed to recompense his pains,

Exclaim'd—Be not displeas'd, if thus I fear

For one whose life I ever held so dear: 315

Give me, by proof, to know thou hast not brought

Some potion here with fatal venom fraught:

Think not my lord the proffer'd cup shall take,

'Till first thy lips the medicine's trial make.

Reflect, sir knight! how stood, depriv'd of speech,

In his own treason caught, the wretched leech; 321

The time that press'd allow'd not to revolve,

And fix his mind on what he should resolve:

Fearful to expose his guilt, he deem'd it best,

Without delay, to give th' exacted test. 325

The sick man then, with unsuspecting thought,

Quaff'd all the remnant of the deadly draught.

The

The deed complete, the leech prepar'd to take
His journey home, some antidote to make,
Ere yet too far the poison through his blood 330
Had spread; but fell Gabrina this withstood.
In vain with prayers, in vain with bribes, he try'd
To be dismiss'd; the traitress this deny'd.
All desperate now, he sees before his eye
Immediate death, nor from that death can fly. 335
Then to th' assistants he the truth expos'd,
Nor could the hag disprove the truth disclos'd.
Thus on himself that good physician brought
Such evil, as he oft for others wrought.
And now his spirit follow'd, to pursue 340
My brother's spirit that before him flew;
While we, who late with freezing horror heard
The truth that by the leech's tale appear'd,
Seiz'd on that fiend, more cruel than the brood
Of savage beasts that haunt the gloomy wood; 345
And in a dungeon shut, condemn'd by fire
For all her crimes in torture to expire.

Thus said Hermonides, and more had spoke,
To tell how from her prison walls she broke,
But, fainting with the anguish of his wound, 350
He backward fell, half senseless, on the ground;

While two attending squires, with ready care,
 Of branches lopt a rustic bier prepare :
 Here, as he will'd, Hermonides they laid,
 And thus, disabled, from the field convey'd. 355
 Zerbino seeks to excuse his luckless deed,
 Much griev'd by him to see the champion bleed ;
 Yet knightly faith compell'd him to oppose,
 In her behalf, whoe'er appear'd her foes.
 In all beside, he stood by deed or word 360
 Prepar'd to aid, with counsel or with sword,
 A knight whose chance his generous heart de-
 plor'd. }

The knight return'd—he wish'd him to beware,
 And rid his hands of fell Gabrina's care,
 Ere her black arts had fram'd some guileful train 365
 To make his grief and late repentance vain.
 Gabrina silent stood, with downcast eye ;
 For truth confirm'd admits not a reply.

Departing thence, Zerbino took his way
 Where with the hag his destin'd journey lay, 370
 His hatred kindled to so fierce a height,
 He turn'd with horror from her loathsome sight.
 She, who beholds Zerbino's secret mind,
 Nor will in enmity remain behind,

Bates not an inch of malice, but repays 375

His hatred with her own a hundred ways :

Black poison rankles in her impious breast,

In every feature rancour stands confess.

When from the west the setting rays appear,

The noise of blows and clashing arms they hear ; 380

The path pursu'd, that to a valley led,

They see a body warm and newly dead :

There Pinabello lay, and, drench'd in blood,

Pour'd from his numerous wounds a crimson flood.

The pitying warrior turn'd aside to trace 385

The track of horses' feet, that mark'd the place,

In hope to find where lurk'd, conceal'd from sight,

The unknown assassin of the murder'd knight :

Meantime he bade Gabrina to remain,

And there expect his quick return again. 390

Now near the scene of death Gabrina drew,

Exploring all the corse with greedy view ;

For still to every other vice she join'd

The deepest avarice of a female mind :

And, but she knew not to conceal her theft, 395

Her hands rapacious had the knight bereft

Of every spoil ; the scarf embroider'd o'er

With gold, and all the glittering arms he wore,

A belt of costly work she safely plac'd
 Beneath her vest, conceal'd around her waist : 400
 'Twas all she could ; and, while of this possess'd,
 The beldame griev'd in heart to leave the rest,

Zerbino, now return'd, who, through the wood,
 With fruitless search had Bradamant pursu'd ;
 The day declin'd, he thence his course address'd, 405
 With that dire hag, to find a place of rest.

Two miles remote they to a castle came,
 (Fam'd Altariva was the castle's name)
 And here they stay'd to pass the approaching night,
 That quench'd the splendor of departing light. 410
 Here scarce arriv'd, on every side they hear
 The voice of loud laments invade their ear.
 Zerbino ask'd what cause their anguish wrought ;
 And heard of tidings to Anselmo brought,
 How, 'twixt two mountains, in a shady dell, 415
 His son, his Pinabello, murder'd fell.

Soon came the bier with Pinabello dead,
 While torches round their solemn splendor shed,
 To where the thickest ranks lamenting stand,
 Raise the shrill cry, and wring the mournful hand ;
 Where every eye is fill'd with gushing woe, 421
 And down the beard the trickling currents flow.

Above

Above the rest, see, impotent in grief,
The wretched father mocks each vain relief;
While all, as sacred custom each invites, 425
Prepare, with pomp, the last funereal rites.

The herald from the prince declares aloud
The sovereign will, and to the murmuring crowd
Proclaims, that he shall vast rewards obtain,
Who tells the wretch by whom his son was slain. 430
These tidings reach'd the hag, whose fury fell
Not bears or tigers of the woods excel;
While impious treason in her bosom wrought,
The presence of th' afflicted earl she fought;
There first with plausible speech his ear amus'd, 435
And good Zerbino of the deed accus'd;
Then from her lap, to prove the story true,
The costly belt produc'd in open view,
Which, seen, too well the wretched parent knew. }

With tears, his hands uplifting to the skies, 440
Thou shalt not perish unreveng'd—he cries;
Then bids surround the house.—With furious zeal
The people, rous'd, obey their ruler's will;
And while no danger near Zerbino knows,
He finds himself a prisoner to his foes, 445

Given

Given to Anselmo's rage, when sunk to rest
Refreshing sleep his heavy eyes depress'd.
Him in a darksome cell that night detain'd,
They kept in shackles and with bolts restrain'd,
Condemn'd to suffer for imputed guilt, 450
In that sad valley where the blood was spilt.
No further proof there needs the fact to try;
Their lord has sentenc'd, and th' accus'd must die.

When from her couch Aurora made return,
With many-coloured beams to paint the morn, 455
With horse and foot, Zerbino thence was led
To atone the blood another's hand had shed.
On a low steed the knight of Scotland rides,
His noble arms close pinion'd to his sides,
And head cast down; but Heaven, that still defends
The guiltless, that for help on him depends, 461
Already watchful o'er the warrior's state,
Prepares to snatch him from impending fate.
Orlando thither comes, and comes to save
The prince from shame and an untimely grave: 465
Galego's daughter, Isabella fair,
With him he brought, whom from the watery war
And bulging vessel sav'd, his noble hand
Had freed, when captive of a lawless band;

EnA

She,

She, whose lov'd form Zerbino's heart possess'd, 470
More dear than life that warm'd his faithful breast.

The knight and virgin from a mountain's brow
Beheld the swarming populace below:
He left his charge, and rushing to the plain,
Zerbino singled from th' ignoble train; 475
And by his outward looks at once divin'd
The chief a baron of no vulgar kind.
Approaching near, he ask'd his cause of shame,
And whither led in bonds, and whence he came.

At this, his head the mourning champion rear'd,
And, when the Paladin's demand he heard, 481
With brief reply his piteous tale disclos'd,
In truth sincere, that soon the earl dispos'd,
For his defence, to combat on his side,
Who, guiltless of the charge, unjustly dy'd. 485
But when he found that Altariva's lord
The sentence past, the noble sufferer's word
Stood more confirm'd; for in Anselmo's breast
He deem'd that justice ne'er her seat possess'd.
Between Maganza's house, and Clarmont, reign'd 490
A lineal hate, from sire to son maintain'd.
Then to the herd he turn'd with threatening cry:
Ye caitiff bands! release the knight, or die!

And

And who is he (said one, to prove his zeal,
 In luckless hour) that thus with words would kill?
 Well was his menace, were our feeble frame 496
 Of wax or straw, and his consuming flame.
 He said; and spurr'd to assail the peer of France;
 And him Orlando met with ready lance.

That glittering armour, which, the night before, 500
 The fierce Maganzan from Zerbino tore,
 Now proudly worn, could not the death prevent,
 Which from his spear Anglante's warrior sent.
 On his right cheek was driven the pointed wood,
 And, though the temper'd helm the point withstood,
 The neck refus'd the furious stroke to bear; 506
 The bone snapt short, and life dissolv'd in air.

At once, while yet the spear remain'd in rest,
 He pierc'd another through the panting breast;
 There left the lance, and Durindana drew, 510
 And midst the thickest press resistless flew,
 Of this, the skull in equal parts he cleaves;
 That, of his head at one fierce stroke bereaves:
 One quits his helmet; one his cumbrous shield;
 All cast their useless weapons on the field. 515
 Some leap the fosse, some scour the broad-way side;
 In forests some, and some in caverns hide.

The

The throng dispers'd, he to Zerbino press'd,
Whose anxious heart yet trembled in his breast:

Low had he fall'n, and prostrate on the ground 520
Ador'd the knight, from whom such aid he found;
But to the steed his feet with cords were bound.

Orlando now his limbs from shackles freed,
And help'd him to resume his warlike weed,
Which late the captain of Maganza's train 525
Had worn in battle, but had worn in vain.

When Isabella, by Orlando's sword
The noble sufferer saw to life restor'd,
She left the hill, and as she nearer drew,
In her his best-belov'd Zerbino knew: 530
Her, whom from lying Fame he mourn'd as lost
In roaring billows on the rocky coast.

As with a bolt of ice, his heart became
All freezing cold; a trembling seiz'd his frame:
But soon a feverish heat succeeding, spread 535
Through every part, and dy'd his cheeks with red.

Love bade him rush, and clasp her to his breast;
But reverence for Anglante's lord repress'd
His eager wish—and, ah! too sure he thought
Her virgin grace the stranger's soul had caught. 540
From sorrows thus to deeper sorrows cast,
He finds how soon his mighty joys are past:

And

And better could he bear to lose her charms
By death, than see her in another's arms.

Thus journeying on, the knights and princely maid,
At length dismounting, near a fountain stay'd: 546

The wearied earl releas'd his laden brows,
And bade Zerbino there his helm uncloze.

Soon as the fair her lover's face espies,
From her soft cheek the rosy colour flies, 550

Then swift returns——So looks the humid flower
When Sol's bright beams succeed the drizzling
shower:

Careless of aught, she runs with eager pace,
And clasps Zerbino with a dear embrace;
There, while in silence to his neck she grows, 555

Tear following tear, his face and breast o'erflows,
Orlando, by their side, attentive stands,
Their meeting marks, nor other proof demands
That this unknown, who late his succour prov'd,
Was prince Zerbino, by the dame belov'd. 560

Soon as the fair-one rais'd her voice to speak,
(The drops yet hanging on her tender cheek)
Her grateful lips no other could proclaim,
Than the full praises of Orlando's name,
His matchless valour for her sake bestow'd, 565
And every courtesy the warrior show'd.

Zerbino

Zerbino now the generous earl ador'd,
Who in one day had twice his life restor'd.

Thus they: when fudden from the neighbouring
brake

They heard, with rustling sound, the branches shake;
Each to his naked head his helm apply'd: 571

Each seiz'd the reins; but, ere he could bestride
His foaming courser, from the woodland came,
Before their fight, a champion and a dame.

The knight was Mandricardo, who pursu'd 575
Orlando's track, till Doralis he view'd:

He knew not yet the fable chief, whose might
Had rais'd his envy, was Anglante's knight;
Him (while beside unmark'd Zerbino stood)

From head to foot he now attentive view'd, 580
And, finding every sign describ'd agree,

Lo! thou the man (he cry'd) I wish'd to see.

Ten days my anxious search, from plain to plain,
Has trac'd thy course, but trac'd till now in vain:

So have thy deeds, in all our camp confest, 585
With emulation fir'd my swelling breast,

For hundreds sent by thee to Pluto's strand,

Where scarcely one escap'd thy dreadful hand,

From Tremizen and Norway's valiant band.

Full well inform'd, I know thy sable dress; 590
Thy vest and armour him I seek confess.
And sure thy looks and bold demeanour tell
That thou art he in battle prov'd so well.

Thee too no less (Orlando thus reply'd)
All must pronounce a knight of valour try'd; 595
For thoughts so noble never shall we find
The tenants of a base degenerate mind.
If me thou com'st to view—indulge thy will—
Unloose my helmet, and behold thy fill—
But having view'd me well, proceed to prove 600
(What most thy generous envy seems to move)
How much in arms my prowess may compare
With that demeanour thou hast held so fair.

'Tis there I fix my wish (the Pagan cry'd);
My first demand is fully satisfy'd. 605

Meanwhile the earl from head to foot explor'd
The Tartar round, but view'd nor ax nor sword;
Then ask'd what weapon must the fight maintain,
Should his first onset with the lance be vain.
Heed not my want (he said)—this single spear 610
Has often taught my bravest foes to fear.
A solemn oath I took, no sword to wear,
Till Durindana from the earl I bear.

Yet

Yet more—my bosom glows with fierce desire
To avenge the death of Agrican, my fire, 615
Whom base Orlando slew in treacherous strife,
Nor could he else have reach'd his noble life.

The earl, no longer silent, stern replies :
Thou ly'st, and each that dares affirm it, lies.
Chance gives thee what thou seek'st—Orlando view
In me, who Agrican with honour slew. 621
Behold the sword thou long hast wish'd to gain,
And, if thou seek'st, with glory may'st obtain.

He said; and instant from his side unbrac'd,
And Durindana on a sapling plac'd. 625

Already each on each impels his steed,
And gives the reins at freedom to his speed :
Already each directs his spear aright,
Where the clos'd helmet but admits the light.
The ash seems brittle ice, and to the sky 630
With sudden crash a thousand splinters fly.

The staves break short—yet neither knight would yield
One foot, one inch—then wheeling round the field,
Again they meet, and with the vant-plate rear,
Firm in each grasp, the truncheon of the spear 635
That yet remain'd—these chiefs that once engag'd
With sword or lance, like rustics now enrag'd,

Whose

(Whose blows dispute the stream or meadow's right,)

With shatter'd staves pursu'd a cruel fight.

Four times they struck, the fourth the truncheon broke

Close to the wrist, nor bore another stroke : 641

While either knight, as mutual fury reign'd,

Alone with gauntlet arm'd the strife maintain'd :

Where'er they grapple, steely plate and scale

They rend asunder, and disjoint the mail : 645

Each nerve exerting, with Orlando clos'd

The Pagan warrior, breast to breast oppos'd,

In hope with him the like success to prove,

As with Antæus once the son of Jove.

With both his arms he grasps the mighty foe, 650

Tugs with full force, and draws him to and fro :

He foams, he raves—he scarcely can contain

His rising rage, nor heeds his courser's rein.

Collected in himself, Orlando tries

Whate'er advantage strength or skill supplies. 655

His hand he to the Pagan's steed extends,

And from his head by chance the bridle rends.

The Saracen with every art essays,

In vain, his rival from the seat to raise ;

Till, yielding to the Pagan's furious force, 660

The girth breaks short, and sudden from his horse

Orlando

Orlando falls to earth ; but still his feet
The stirrups keep, and still, as in the seat,
His thighs are strain'd, while, with a clanking sound,
His armour rattled as he touch'd the ground. 665
The adverse courser, from the bridle freed,
Across the champaign bends with rapid speed
His devious way : when thus the fair * espy'd
Her lover borne from her unguarded side ;
Without his presence fearful to remain, 670
His flight to trace, she turns her palfrey's rein.

The haughty Pagan, as his courser flies,
Now foothes, now strikes, and now with angry cries
He threatens the beast, as if with sense indu'd,
That, mindless of his lord, his way pursu'd. 675
Three miles he bore, and still had borne the knight,
But that a crossing ditch oppos'd their flight :
There fell both man and horse : the Pagan struck
Against the ground, but from the dangerous shock
Escap'd unhurt.—To whom the damsel cry'd, 680
Lo! from my palfrey be your need supply'd ;
Bridled or loose, mine, patient of command,
Obeys the voice, and answers to the hand.

* DORALIS.

The Pagan deem'd it ill a knight became
 To accept the proffer of the courteous dame; 685
 But Fortune, wont her kindly aid to give,
 Found better means that might his wants relieve,
 And foul Gabrina to the place convey'd,
 Who, since her guile Zerbino had betray'd,
 Shunn'd every stranger, like the wolf that flies 690
 The hunters' voice, and dogs' pursuing cries.
 This beldame now the youthful vestments wore,
 Which Pinabello's dame had worn before.
 King Stordilano's daughter, and her knight,
 Beheld with laughter such an uncouth sight: 695
 From her, his courser's bridle to supply,
 He takes the reins; then, with a shouting cry,
 Her palfrey drives, that to the forest bears
 The trembling crone expiring with her fears,
 Through rough or even paths, o'er hills and dales, 700
 By hanging cliffs, deep streams, or gloomy vales.
 Orlando stay'd, in hopes, ere long, to view
 His foe return, the combat to renew;
 At length resolv'd the Tartar to pursue.
 Yet, ere he went, as one whose deeds express'd 705
 The soft effusions of a courteous breast,

With

With gentle speech, fair smiles, and open look,
He friendly leave of both the lovers took.

Zerbino mourn'd to quit the generous chief;
And Isabella wept with tender grief: 710

The noble earl their earnest suit refus'd
To share his fortune, and to each excus'd
What honour must deny; for greater shame,
He urg'd, could never stain a warrior's name,
Than, in the day of glorious strife, to make 715
A friend his danger and his toils partake.

This said: as each his separate fortune guides,
Zerbino here, and there Orlando rides:
But ere the valiant earl the place forsook,
His trusty falchion from the tree he took. 720

The winding course the Pagan's steed pursu'd
Through the thick covert of th' entangled wood,
Perplex'd Orlando, who, with fruitless pain,
Two days had follow'd, nor his sight could gain;
Then reach'd a stream that through a meadow led,
Whose vivid turf an emerald carpet spread, 726
Spangled with flowers of many a dazzling hue,
Where numerous trees in beauteous order grew,
Whose shadowy branches gave a kind retreat
To flocks, and naked swains, from mid-day heat. 730

With ponderous cuirass, shield, and helm oppress'd,
Orlando soon the welcome gales confess'd;
And entering here to seek a short repose,
In evil chance a dreadful feat he chose.

There, casting round a casual glance, he view'd 735
Full many a tree, that trembled o'er the flood,
Inscrib'd with words, in which, as near he drew,
The hand of his Angelica he knew.

This place was one, of many a mead and bower,
For which Medoro, at the fultry hour, 740

Oft left the shepherd's cot, by love inspir'd,
And with Cathay's unrivall'd queen retir'd.

Angelica and her Medoro, twin'd

In amorous posies on the sylvan rind,

He sees; while every letter proves a dart, 745
Which love infixes in his bleeding heart.

Fain would he, by a thousand ways, deceive

His cruel thoughts—fain would he not believe

What sight confirms—then hopes some other fair

The name of his Angelica may bear. 750

But ah! (he cry'd) too surely can I tell

Those characters oft seen and known so well—

Yet should this fiction but conceal her love,

Medoro then may blest Orlando prove.

Thus,

Thus, self-deceiv'd, forlorn Orlando strays 755
Still far from truth, still wanders in the maze
Of doubts and fears, while in his breast he tries
To feed that hope his better sense denies.
So the poor bird, that from his fields of air
Lights in the fraudulent gin or viscous snare, 760
The more he flutters, and the subtle wiles
Attempts to 'scape, the faster makes the toils.

Now came Orlando where the pendent hill,
Curv'd in an arch, o'erhung the limpid rill:
Around the cavern's mouth were seen to twine 765
The creeping ivy and the curling vine.
Oft here the happy pair were wont to waste
The noontide heats, embracing and embrac'd;
And chiefly here, inscrib'd or carv'd, their names
Innumerable witness'd to their growing flames. 770
Alighting here, the warrior pensive stood,
And at the grotto's rustic entrance view'd
Words by the hand of young Medoro trac'd,
Such as, when late with beauty's favour grac'd,
For bliss conferr'd his grateful thanks express'd, 775
And thus in tuneful verse his passion dress'd.

Hail! lovely plants, clear streams, and meadows
green;

And thou, dear cave, whose cool sequester'd scene

No sun molests ! Where she, of royal strain,
Angelica, by numbers woo'd in vain, 780
Daughter of Galaphron, with heavenly charms,
Was oft enfolded in these happy arms !

O ! let me, poor Medoro, thus repay
Such nameless rapture ; thus with every lay
Of grateful praise the tender bosom move, 785
Lords, knights, and dames, that know the sweets of
love ;

Each traveller, or hind of low degree,
Whom choice or fortune leads this place to see ;
Till all shall cry—Thou sun, thou moon, attend !
This fountain, grotto, mead, and shade defend ! 790
Guard them, ye choir of nymphs ! nor let the swain
With flocks or herds the sacred haunts profane !

Three times he reads, as oft he reads again
The cruel lines ; as oft he strives, in vain,
To give each sense the lie, and fondly tries 795
To disbelieve the witness of his eyes ;
While at each word he feels the jealous smart,
And sudden coldness freezing at his heart.
Fix'd on the stone, in stiffening gaze, that prov'd
His secret pangs, he stood with looks unmov'd, 800
A breathing statue ! while the godlike light
Of reason nearly seem'd eclips'd in night ;

Confide

Confide in him, who by experience knows,
This is the woe surpassing other woes !
From his sad brow the wonted cheer is fled, 805
Low on his breast declines his drooping head;
Nor can he find (while grief each sense o'erbears)
Voice for his plaints, or moisture for his tears :
Impatient sorrow seeks its way to force,
But with too eager haste retards the course. 810
As when a full-brimm'd vase, with ample waist
And slender entrance form'd, is downward plac'd,
And stands revers'd, the rushing waters pent,
All crowd at once to issue at the vent ;
The narrow vent the struggling tide restrains, 815
And scarcely drop by drop the bubbling liquor drains.

When setting Phœbus to his sister's reign
Resign'd the skies, Orlando mounts again
His Brigliadoro's back, and soon espies
The curling smoke from neighbouring hamlets rise :
The herds are heard to low, the dogs to bay; 821
And to the village now his lonely way
Orlando takes ; there pale and languid leaves
His Brigliadoro, where a youth receives
The generous courser ; while, with ready haste, 825
One from the champion has his mail unbrac'd ;

One takes his spurs of gold ; and one from rust
His armour scours, and cleanses from the dust.

Lo ! this the cot, where feeble with his wound
Medoro lay, where wondrous chance he found. 830

No nourishment the warrior here desir'd ;
On grief he fed, nor other food requir'd.

He sought to rest, but ah ! the more he sought,
New pangs were added to his troubled thought :

Where'er he turn'd his sight, he still deserv'd 835
The hated words inscrib'd on every side :

He would have spoke, but held his peace in fear
To know the truth he dreaded most to hear.

The gentle swain, who mark'd his secret grief,
With cheerful speech to give his pains relief, 840

Told all th' adventure that the pair besel,

Which oft before his tongue was wont to tell

To every guest that gave a willing ear ;

For many a guest was pleas'd the tale to hear.

He told, how to his cot the virgin brought 845

Medoro wounded ; how his cure she wrought,

While in her bosom Love's impoison'd dart

With deeper wound transfix'd her bleeding heart :

Hence, mindless of her birth, a princess bred,

Rich India's heir, she deign'd, by passion led, 850

A friendless youth of low estate to wed.

In

In witness of his tale, the peasant shew'd
The bracelet by Angelica bestow'd,
Departing thence, her token of regard
His hospitable welcome to reward. 855

This fatal proof, his well-known present, left
Of every gleam of hope his soul bereft:
Love, that had tortur'd long his wretched thrall,
With this concluding stroke determin'd all.

At length, from every view retir'd apart, 860
He gives full vent to his o'erlabour'd heart:

Now from his eyes the streaming shower releas'd,
Stains his pale cheek, and wanders down his breast;
Deeply he groans, and, staggering with his woes,
On the lone bed his listless body throws; 865

But rests no more than if in wilds forlorn,
Stretch'd on the naked rock or pointed thorn.

While thus he lay, he sudden call'd to mind,
That on the couch, where then his limbs reclin'd,
His faithless mistress and her spouse repos'd, 870

And oft their eyes in balmy slumber clos'd.

Stung with the thought, the hated down he flies:
Not swifter from the turf is seen to rise

The swain, who, courting grateful sleep, perceives
A serpent darting through the rustling leaves. 875

Each

Each object now is loathsome to his sight;
The bed—the cot—the swain—he heeds no light
To guide his steps, not Dian's silver ray,
Nor cheerful dawn, the harbinger of day.
He takes his armour, and his steed he takes, 880
And through surrounding gloom impatient makes
His darkling way, there vents his woes alone,
In many a dreadful plaint and dreary groan.
Unceasing still he weeps, unceasing mourns;
Alike to him the night, the day, returns; 885
Cities and towns he shuns; in woods he lies,
His bed the earth, his canopy the skies.
He wonders oft what fountain can supply
His floods of grief; how sigh succeeds to sigh.
These are not tears (he cry'd) that ceaseless flow; 890
Far other signs are these that speak my woe.
Before the fire my vital moisture flies,
And now, exhaling, issues at my eyes:
Lo! thus it streams, and thus shall ever spend,
Till with its course my life and sorrows end. 895
These are not sighs that thus my torments show;
Sighs have a pause, but these no respite know.
Love burns my heart! these are the gales he makes,
As round the flame his fanning wings he shakes.

How canst thou, wondrous Love! surround with fire,
Yet, unconsum'd, preserve my heart entire? 901
I am not he, the man my looks proclaim,
The man that lately bore Orlando's name;
He, by his fair one's cruel falsehood, dies;
And now, interr'd, her hapless victim lies. 905
I am his spirit freed from mortal chains,
Doom'd in this hell to rove with endless pains;
A wretched warning here on earth to prove
For all henceforth who put their trust in love.

Through the still night, the earl from shade to shade
Thus lonely rovd, and when the day display'd 911
Its twilight gleam, chance to the fountain led
His wandering course, where first his fate he read
In fond Medoro's strains—the sight awakes
His torpid sense, each patient thought forsakes 915
His maddening breast, that rage and hatred breathes,
And from his side he swift the sword unsheaths.
He hews the rock, he makes the letters fly;
The shatter'd fragments mount into the sky:
Hapless the cave whose stones, the trees whose rind 920
Bear with Angelica Medoro join'd;
From that curs'd day no longer to receive,
And flocks or swains with cooling shade relieve;

While

While that fair fountain, late so silvery pure,
Remain'd as little from his rage secure : 925

Together boughs and earthen clods he drew,
Craggs, stones, and trunks, and in the waters threw ;
Deep in its bed, with ooze and mud he pil'd
The murmuring current, and its spring defil'd.

His limbs now moisten'd with a briny tide, 930

When strength no more his senseless wrath supply'd,

Low on the turf he sunk, unnerv'd and spent,

All motionless, his looks on heaven intent,

Stretch'd without food or sleep ; while thrice the sun
Had stay'd, and thrice his daily course had run. 935

The fourth dire morn, with frantic rage possess'd,

He rends the armour from his back and breast :

Here lies the helmet, there the bossy shield,

Cuirasses and cuirasses further spread the field ;

And all his other arms, at random strow'd, 940

In divers parts he scatters through the wood ;

Then from his body strips the covering vest,

And bares his sinewy limbs and hairy chest ;

And now begins such feats of boundless rage,

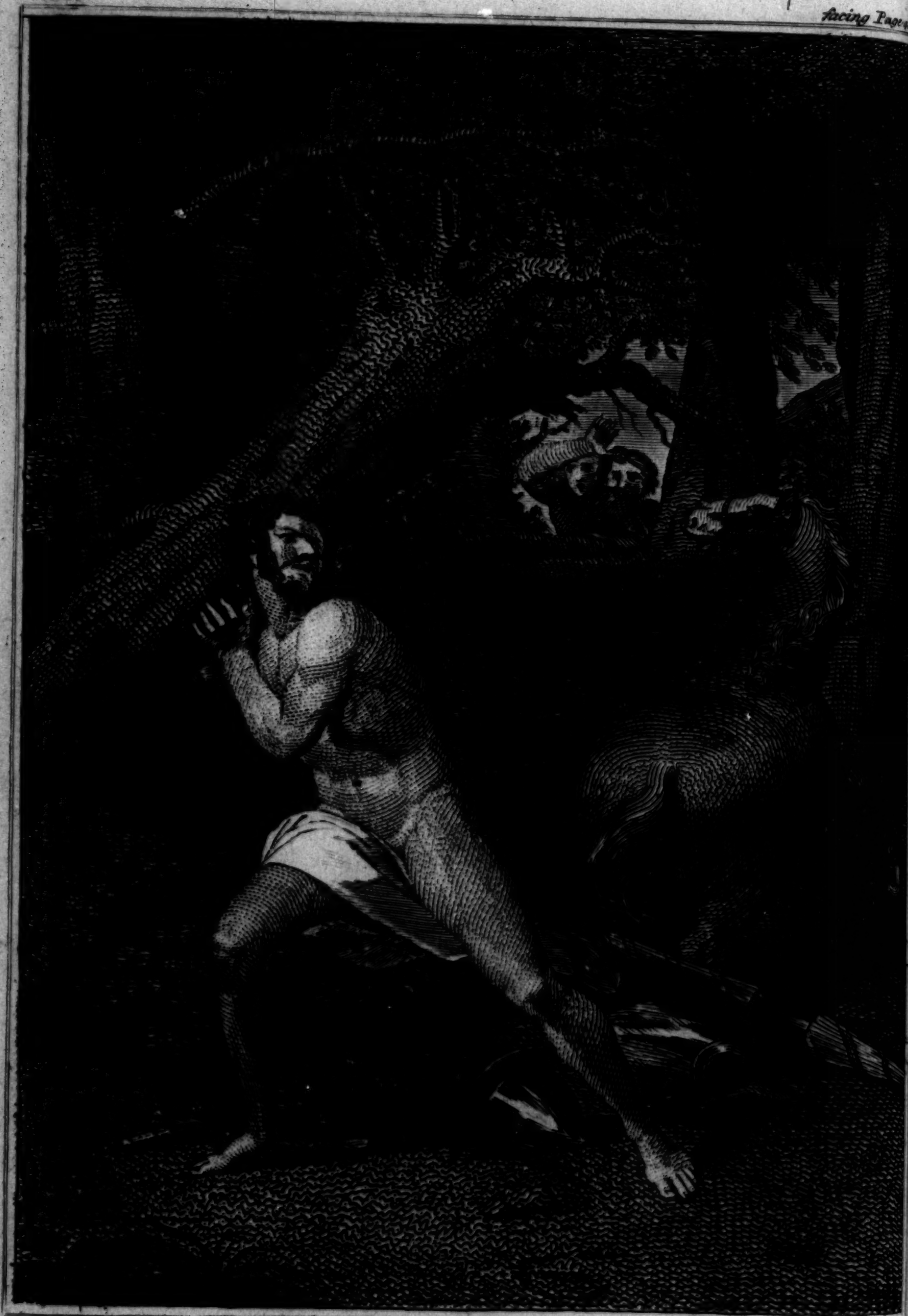
As far and near th' astonish'd world engage. 945

His sword he left, else had his dreadful hand

With blood and horror fill'd each wasted land ;

But





Stechard del.

Blade

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But little pole-ax, sword, or mace he needs
To assist his strength, that every strength exceeds.
First his huge grasp a lofty pine up-tears 950
Sheer by the roots; the like another fares
Of equal growth; as easy round him strow'd,
As lowly weeds, or shrubs, or dwarfish wood.
Vast oaks and elms before his fury fall;
The stately fir, tough ash, and cedar tall. 955
As when a fowler for the field prepares
His sylvan warfare; ere he spreads his snares,
From stubble, reeds, and furze, th' obstructed land
Around he clears: no less Orlando's hand
Levels the trees that long had tower'd above, 960
For rolling years the glory of the grove!
The rustic swains that 'mid the woodland shade
Heard the loud crash, forsook their flocks that stray'd
Without a shepherd, while their masters flew
To learn the tumult and the wonder view. 965
As nearer now the madman they beheld,
Whose feats of strength all human strength excell'd,
They turn'd to fly; but knew not where nor whence,
Such sudden fears distracted every sense.
Swift he pursu'd, and one who vainly fled, 970
He seiz'd, and from the shoulders rent the head;

Eafy, as from the ftalk or tender fhoot,
A peafant crops the flower or plucks the fruit.

Now might ye hear in every village rife
Tumultuous clamours, blending human cries 975
With ruftic horns and pipes, while echo'd round
The pealing bells from neighbouring fteeples found.
All feize fuch weapons as the time provides,
Bows, flings, and ftaves; and down the mountain's
fides

A thoufand ruft; while from the dells below 980
As many fwarm againft a naked foe.

Ten wretches firft, then other ten he flew,
That near his hand in wild diforder drew.
None from his fated fkin could lance the blood;
His fkin unhurt the fharpeft edge withftood. 985

The crowd, that faw each weapon aim'd in vain,
With backward fteps retreated from the plain;
Then through the country round, with rapid pace,
To man or beaft alike he gave the chace;
Through the deep covert of the tangled wood, 990
The nimble goat or fleeter deer purfu'd;
Off on the bear or tufky boar he flew,
And with his fingle arm in combat flew.

END OF THE ELEVENTH BOOK.

THE
TWELFTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO.

THE ARGUMENT.

ZERBINO and Isabella are met by Almonio and Corebo, who bring Odorico prisoner. Arrival of Gabrina, and the sentence passed on these two by Zerbino. Zerbino fights with Mandricardo in defence of Orlando's sword: issue of the combat. Meeting of Mandricardo and Rodomont: their battle; they are parted, and agree to go to the assistance of Agramant. Rogero, after having cast his shield into the well, arrives at the castle of Agrismont, where he meets Richardetto, and is entertained by Aldiger of the house of Clarmont. Rogero's letter to Bradamant in excuse for his absence. Rogero, Richardetto and Aldiger set out next day to rescue Malagigi and Vivian from the hands of Pagans.



THE
 TWELFTH BOOK
 OF
 ORLANDO.

ORLANDO gone, awhile Zerbino stood,
 Then took the path the Paladin pursu'd;
 Scarce past a mile, slow riding, when he spy'd
 A recreant knight, with hands behind him ty'd,
 Plac'd on a humble steed, and for his guard, 5
 On either side a knight in arms prepar'd.
 Full soon Zerbino, as he nearer drew,
 Full soon the lovely Isabella knew
 False Odorico, trusted late to keep
 Her virgin charms, like wolves to watch the sheep. 10

The two, who thither brought the faithless knight,
 On Isabella cast their wondering sight,
 As one they oft had seen; with her they guess'd
 Their dearest lord, the partner of her breast,

Companion rode ; for well his blazon'd shield 15

The colours of his noble line reveal'd.

Approaching near, they saw with raptur'd eyes

His well-known face confirm their first surmise.

Swift from their steeds they leapt, with eager pace,

And open arms, impatient to embrace 20

Zerbino's knees : bareheaded now they stood

Before his sight, and lowly reverent bow'd.

Zerbino fix'd on each his earnest view,

And soon Corebo and Almonio knew ;

Those well-try'd friends, to whom he gave the care 25

With Odorico to protect the fair.

Almonio then—Since Heaven has pleas'd once more

To thee thy Isabella to restore,

Why should I now, my much-lov'd lord, relate

What well thou know'st—why in this captive state 30

Yon caitiff rides—for she, the fair betray'd,

Has long ere this his treacherous guilt display'd ;

Has told, how by his base and guileful art

Deceiv'd, the wretch induc'd me to depart ;

How brave Corebo to defend her stood, 35

And, deeply wounded, shed his generous blood.

Attend the sequel—From the town in haste,

With steeds and menials, to the strand I pass'd ;

Still

Still casting round my eager eyes, to find
The friends and virgin whom I left behind. 40

Foremost I spurr'd, and travers'd all the shore,
Search'd every part their feet had trod before :

In vain—no sign appear'd on either hand,
But some new marks of footsteps on the sand.

I follow'd these, and these my course convey'd 45
Beneath the covert of the woodland shade :

Led by the sound of arms, at length I found
Unblest Corebo bleeding on the ground——

Where is our virgin-charge I left so late ?

Where Odorico ? say, what adverse fate 50

Has here reduc'd thee to this wretched state ?

Thus I—and now, the fatal truth reveal'd,

I fought th' apostate wretch ; the wretch conceal'd

Deceiv'd my search, and all the day beguil'd,

Through wood and brake I wander'd in the wild ; 55

At length return'd to where a crimson tide

From pale Corebo's wounds the herbage dy'd.

Then from the woodland to the town I bore

The fainting youth, his vigour to restore.

Corebo cur'd, he took his arms and horse ; 60

To find the wretch we bent our eager course :

Him in Alphonso's regal court I met,

And, dar'd in open list, against him set

My trusty lance : the king allow'd the fight
With every legal form to prove the right. 65

My cause prevail'd ;—to me the monarch gave
His forfeit life, to punish or to save.

Nor would I free, nor take his guilty head,
But thus to thee in captive chains have led,
That thy decree might doom him to be slain, 70
Or kept alive, reserv'd for further pain.

All thanks to Heaven ! that thus, when least I thought
To see my prince, my happy steps has brought :

Nor less my thanks, that thus I see restor'd
Thy Isabella to her plighted lord. 75

Zerbino silent, while Almonio spoke,
On Odorico fix'd his earnest look ;
Till, with a deep-drawn sigh, he rais'd his head,
And thus, benignant, to the prisoner said :
Declare, unhappy, nor the truth suppress ; 80

And, if we right have heard, thy guilt confess.
At this the faithless friend, low-bending, press'd
His knee to earth, and thus his lord address'd.

To err is still the lot of man below :
But hence the good from wicked minds we know ; 85
The last, by nature prone to every fault,
At once give way to evil's first assault.

The

The good for brave defence their weapons wield,
 But, if the foe be strong, no less they yield.
 Hadst thou, O prince! consign'd to my command 90
 Some frontier post, and had my dastard hand
 Without resistance given the hostile powers
 To plant their standard on thy conquer'd towers;
 Then might the foulest curse pursue my name,
 The traitor's danger, and the coward's shame: 95
 But, if compell'd to yield, not blame would meet,
 But praise itself might follow such defeat.

'Twas mine to guard my faith from mental foes,
 Like some strong fort which numerous troops enclose.
 With all the force supply'd me from above 100
 By Heaven's supreme decree, full long I strove
 To guard the fortress, till my vigour fail'd,
 And the strong foe with stronger arms prevail'd.

He ceas'd: Zerbino stood in deep suspense,
 Or to forgive, or punish such offence. 105
 Thoughts of the heavy crime now seem'd to wake
 His sleeping wrath, the traitor's life to take:
 Now dear remembrance of their friendship past,
 Which, till that fatal chance, so firm could last,
 With pity's stream resentment's flame suppress'd, 110
 And nourish'd mercy in his generous breast.

While unresolv'd Zerbino still remains
 To free the offender, or to hold in chains;
 By death to sweep him from his sight, or give
 The wretch in lengthen'd sufferings yet to live; 115
 Behold loud neighing comes th' affrighted steed,
 Which Mandricardo from his bridle freed,
 And with him bears Gabrina pale for breath,
 Whose guile had nearly wrought Zerbino's death.
 Soon as Zerbino thither bends his eyes, 120
 He lifts his hands in praises to the skies,
 For two so wicked to his power resign'd,
 Whose deeds deserv'd his deepest hate to find.

Then, turning to his friends, he cries—I give
 My free consent the faithless youth shall live: 125
 Though such offence may scarce forgiveness gain,
 At least it merits not severest pain.
 Love has ere this a firmer bosom brought
 To guilt more deep than Odorico's fault,
 Which now we judge—to him let grace be shown, 130
 The suffering should be mine, and mine alone:
 Blind as I was, so vast a trust to yield,
 Yet knew how flame can catch the stubble field!
 To Odorico then—Be this thy doom,
 The penance of thy deed—thy task to come; 135

One circling year this woman's steps attend,
 From all that seek her life, her life defend;
 Her foes be thine—and range, at her command,
 The realms of spacious France from land to land.

He said; and fram'd a solemn oath to bind 140
 The recreant knight to keep the terms enjoin'd;
 And vow'd, if e'er he broke the faith he swore,
 And fell again the captive of his power,
 No longer prayer or mercy to regard,
 But with his death his perjury reward. 145

Then to Almonio and his friend he made
 A sign to free their prisoner; these obey'd:
 And now the faithless knight the place forsook,
 And with him thence that aged beldame took.
 But soon the traitor, deaf to every call 150
 Of plighted faith, to free himself from thrall,
 Around her neck a ready halter flung,
 And to an elm the crone detested hung:
 One year he led a life of wandering state,
 Then from Almonio found Gabrina's fate. 155

Zerbino, who the Paladin pursues
 With earnest search, and fears the track to lose,
 Now sends Almonio to his martial train,
 Anxious what cause could thus their lord detain.

With good Almonjo is Corebo join'd, 160
And Isabella sole remains behind.

Great was the love that Scotland's prince profess'd,
And great in Isabella's tender breast,
For brave Orlando; great was either's zeal
To learn what chance the virtuous earl besel. 165

At length they came, where, 'midst the lonely grove,
The fair ingrate had carv'd the notes of love.
The spring disturb'd, the trees and cave they view'd,
Those lopt and rooted, this in fragments hew'd.
And soon the knight's abandon'd arms they knew, 170
The cuirass, shield, and helm of fable hue.

They heard a courser in the woods conceal'd
Repeated neigh, and now advanc'd, beheld
Where Brighaduro graz'd the verdant plain,
While from his saddle hung the loosen'd rein. 175
They Durindana fought, and soon they found
The sword, unsheath'd, lie useless on the ground;
And saw the surcoat, which, in pieces strow'd,
The wretched earl had scatter'd through the wood.

With Isabella now Zerbino gaz'd 180
In sad suspense, while every object rais'd
A secret fear, yet little they divin'd
(Howe'er they weigh'd the signs with anxious mind) }
Orlando from his better sense disjoin'd.

And

And now a rustic hind with headlong pace
Approach'd, deep terror on his bloodless face,
Who late in safety, from a rock's tall height,
Beheld the wretched madman's frantic might.
He certain tidings to Zerbino gives,
Who, fill'd with wonder, scarce the truth believes,
Though clear the proofs—the shepherd's tale he hears
With pitying heart, and leaves his seat in tears.
He lights to gather from the woodland ground
The warlike relics widely scatter'd round.
With him the gentle fair her steed forfakes,
And from the ground the arms and vestment takes;
When, lo! appears a dame in looks distrest,
Sighs frequent bursting from her mournful breast:
'Twas Flordelis, who rov'd with anxious pain,
To find her absent lord, o'er hill and plain;
Who late forsook (at friendship's sacred call
To seek Orlando) Paris' regal wall:
All parts she search'd, save where, estrang'd from home,
He liv'd, in old Atlantes' magic dome;
Where, with Rogero, Brandimart detain'd,
Where, with Orlando, stern Ferrau remain'd.
But when Astolpho, with his wondrous blast,
Had driven the sorcerer from his seats aghast,

To Paris Brandimart again return'd,
 Unknown to her, who still his absence mourn'd. 210
 Too well the Brigliadoro knew, who stray'd
 Without his lord, and, ah! with grief survey'd
 Each cruel object, while she heard relate
 The dreadful sequel of Orlando's fate.

Zerbino now the arms together drew, 215
 And fix'd them on a pine in open view,
 A trophy fair! and, lest some venturous knight
 (Native or stranger born) on these should light,
 The verdant rind this brief inscription bore;

THESE ARMS THE PALADIN ORLANDO WORE. 220

As if he said—Let none these arms remove,
 But such as dare Orlando's fury prove.

This pious task perform'd, the prince with speed
 Prepar'd to part; but, ere he rein'd his steed,
 Fierce Mandricardo came, who, when he turn'd 225
 And saw the trunk with those rich spoils adorn'd,
 He ask'd from whence, and who such arms dispos'd;
 To whom Zerbino, all he knew, disclos'd.

The Pagan king o'erjoy'd, no longer stay'd,
 Approach'd the pine, then seiz'd the sword, and said.

Let rashly none presume my deed to blame, 231
 This fatal blade by law of arms I claim:

Long, long ere now this gallant sword was won,
And still, where'er I find, I claim my own.
Orlando, fearing to defend his right,
Has feign'd his madness but to shun the fight:
Then wherefore should I now forbear to take
What coward baseness urg'd him to forsake?

Rash knight, refrain—nor think (Zerbino cries)
Without dispute to snatch the glorious prize.
If such thy claim to Hector's arms, then know
'Twas theft, not valour, did those arms bestow.

No more was said; for each with equal heat,
And equal courage, springs his foe to meet.
Scarce is the fight begun, when echo'd round
A hundred blows their polish'd arms resound.
Where Durindana threatens from on high,
Zerbino seems a rapid flame to fly
The falling stroke, whene'er to shun the steel
Light as a deer he makes his courser wheel
Behoves him now his utmost skill to employ,
Since, from that edge, accustom'd to destroy,
One wound might send him to the dreary grove,
Where love-lorn ghosts through shades of myrtle rove,
As singled from the herd, the nimble hound
Invades the boar, and cautious circling round,

Shifts every side, but still maintains the field,
By turns assaulting, and by turns repell'd.
So brave Zerbino, as the sword descends,
Or threats aloft, with wariest heed attends. 260
Thus he; while fiercely as the Pagan foe
Whirls his dread sword, and gives or fails the blow,
He seems a whirlwind that from heaven descends,
And 'twixt two Alpine hills the forest rends;
Now bent to earth the trees deep groaning bears, 265
Now from the trunks the shatter'd branches tears.
Though oft Zerbino turn'd aside, or fled
The trenchant blade, at length the Pagan sped
A downward stroke, that with full force imprest,
Between the sword and buckler, reach'd his breast. 270
Strong was the corset, strong the plated mail,
With texture firm; yet all could nought avail
Against the blade, that thundering from above,
Through plate and mail, and shatter'd corset drove.
The sword fell short, else had the stroke design'd 275
Cleft all the knight, yet reach'd so far to find
The naked part, whence from the shallow wound,
A span in length, the warm blood trickling round
Stray'd o'er his shining arms, and stain'd the
ground.

So have I seen a filken floweret spread, 280
And dye the silver vest with blushing red,
Wrought by her snowy hand with matchless art,
That hand, whose whiteness oft has pierc'd my heart.
Ah! what avails the good Zerbino now
Courage to dare, or strength to urge the blow, 285
Though master of the war?—Here virtue fail'd,
Where stronger arms and stronger nerve prevail'd.
Slight was the wound, though by the crimson hue
Not slight it seem'd, but, startled at the view,
Pale Isabella's heart, with fear oppress'd, 290
All cold and trembling, sunk within her breast.
Zerbino, fir'd with generous thirst of fame,
With deep resentment stung, and conscious shame,
Rais'd both his hands, and with redoubled might
Struck on the helmet of the Tartar knight. 295
The staggering Saracen the weight confess'd,
And to the saddle bow'd his haughty crest:
Th' enchanted casque made every weapon vain,
Else that dire stroke had cleft him to the brain.
Impatient for revenge, the Pagan lord 300
Against Zerbino's helmet rais'd the sword.
Zerbino, who the foe's intent beheld,
Swift to the right his well-taught courser wheel'd;

Yet

Yet not so swift, nor could he shun so well
The biting edge, which on his buckler fell, 305
But through the plates from side to side it went,
And deep beneath his mailed gauntlet rent;
Laid bare his arm, then glancing downward found
His steel-clad thigh, and deep impress'd a wound.
Now here, now there, Zerbino strikes in vain; 310
The foe's tough arms, unhurt, the stroke sustain:
Each pass he tries; no pass the plates afford,
But harmless from the surface bounds the sword.
Not so the Tartar king—his fiercer might
With such advantage urg'd the unequal fight; 315
Seven times his steel has drunk Zerbino's blood,
Has pierc'd or cleft his shield, his helmet hew'd.
By slow degrees life's issuing current drains
His ebbing strength, but dauntless he remains:
His vigorous heart, still nourish'd with the flame 320
Of inbred worth, supports his feeble frame.
Sad Isabella, now with fears distress'd,
To Doralis her earnest suit address'd;
By every power adjur'd her to suppress
The battle's rage, and turn their strife to peace. 325
Courteous as fair, and doubting yet the event
Of combat, Doralis with glad consent

To Isabella yielding, soon inclin'd
To friendly truce her valiant lover's mind.
Not less Zerbino calm'd his vengeful heart 330
For her he lov'd, consenting to depart
Where'er she led; and, at her powerful word,
Unfinish'd left th' adventure of the sword.

But Flordelis, who ill-defended view'd
Unblest Orlando's falchion, weeping stood 335
To wail the chance; and oft she wish'd that fate
Had brought her lord to share the dire debate;
And, parting thence, from morn till eve again
She fought her Brandimart, but fought in vain.

Though scarce Zerbino now his seat maintains, 340
So fast his blood has flow'd, so fast it drains,
Yet, self-reproach afflicts his noble mind,
For Durindana to the foe resign'd:
His pains increase—and soon with shortening breath
He feels the certain chill approach of death. 345

Th' enfeebled warrior now his courser stays,
And near a fountain's side his limbs he lays.
Ah! what avails the wretched virgin's grief?
What can she here to yield her lord relief?
In desert wilds for want she sees him die, 350
No friend to help, no peopled dwelling nigh,

Where

Where she, for pity or reward, may find
Some skilful leech his streaming wounds to bind.
In vain she weeps—in vain with frantic cries
She calls on Fortune, and condemns the skies. 355
Why was I not in surging waters lost,
When first my vessel left Galicia's coast?
Zerbino, as his dying eyes he turn'd
On her, while thus her cruel fate she mourn'd,
More felt her sorrows, than the painful strife 360
Of nature struggling on the verge of life.

My heart's sole treasure! may'st thou still (he said)
When I, alas! am number'd with the dead,
Preserve my love—think not for death I grieve;
But thee thus guideless and forlorn to leave, 365
Weighs heavy here—O! were my mortal date
Prolong'd to see thee in a happier state,
Blest were this awful hour—content in death,
On that lov'd bosom to resign my breath.
But summon'd now at Fate's unpitying call, 370
Unknown what future lot to thee may fall—
By those soft lips, by those fond eyes I swear,
By those dear locks that could my heart ensnare!
Despairing to the shades of night I go,
Where thoughts of thee, left to a world of woe, 375
Shall

Shall rend this faithful breast with deeper pains
Than all that hell's avenging realm contains.

At this, sad Isabella pour'd a shower
Of trickling tears, and lowly bending o'er,
Close to his mouth her trembling lips she laid, 380
His mouth now pale like some fair rose decay'd;
A vernal rose, that, cropt before the time,
Bends the green stalk, and withers ere its prime.

Think not (she said) life of my breaking heart!

Without thy Isabella to depart: 385

Let no such fears thy dying bosom rend;
Where'er thou go'st, my spirit shall attend:

One hour to both shall like dismissal give,
Shall fix our doom, in future worlds to live,
And part no more—when ruthless death shall close
Thy fading eyes—that moment ends my woes! 391

Or should I still survive that stroke of grief,
At least thy sword will yield a sure relief.

And, ah! I trust, reliev'd from mortal state,
Each breathless corse will meet a milder fate; 395

When some, in pity of our hapless doom,
May close our bodies in one peaceful tomb.

Thus she; and while his throbbing pulse she feels
Weak, and more weak, as death relentless steals

Each vital sense, with her sad lip she drains 400
The last faint breath of life that yet remains.

To raise his feeble voice Zerbino try'd—
I charge thee now, O lov'd in death! (he cry'd)
By that affection which thy bosom bore,
When, for my sake, thou left'st thy father's shore, 405
And, if a truth like mine such power can give,
While Heaven shall please, I now command thee, live:
But never be it from thy thoughts remov'd,
That, much as man can love, Zerbino lov'd.
Fear not but God, in time, will succour lend, 410
From every ill thy virtue to defend;
As once he sent the Roman knight * to save
Thy youth unfriended from the robber's cave:
As from the seas he drew thee safe to land,
And snatch'd thee from th' impure Biscayner's hand:
And when at last all other hopes we lose, 416
Be death the last sad refuge that we choose.

Thus spoke the dying knight; but scarce were
heard

His latter words, in accents weak prefer'd.
Here ended life—the light so drooping dies, 420
When oil or wax no more the flame supplies.

* ORLANDO.

What

What tongue can tell how mourn'd the wretched maid,
What plaints she utter'd, and what tears she shed,
When in her arms her dear Zerbino lay,
All icy cold, a lump of lifeless clay! 425
Prone on the bleeding corse herself she threw,
Clasp'd his stiff limbs, and bath'd with tender dew:
She rav'd so loud, that all the plains around,
And woods, re-echo'd the distressful sound:
Nor her white breast nor blooming cheeks she spares,
But cruel that she strikes, and these she tears; 431
She rends her golden locks, that know not blame,
Invoking, vainly, oft the much-lov'd name;
And, little mindful of Zerbino's charge,
His sword had set her frantic soul at large, 435
But, lo! a hermit, wont each stated day
To the clear fount to bend his lonely way,
Came from his neighbouring dwelling, timely sent,
By Heaven's high will to oppose her dire intent.
This reverend man, in whom at once were join'd 440
A sage experience and a gentle mind,
Whose hallow'd wisdom all examples knew,
And brought, as in a mirror, these to view;
Now, with a pious healing hand, address'd
The balm of patience to her wounded breast, 445

And many a woman bright in virtue nam'd,
 In either volume's * sacred text proclaim'd.
 He rais'd her thoughts above this vale of strife,
 To dedicate to Heaven her future life.
 Yet would she never banish from her mind
 Zerbino's love, or leave his corse behind;
 Resolv'd through all her pilgrimage to bear
 With her the reliicks of a form so dear.

Then, by the hermit's aid, who show'd in age
 A strength of limb his years could ill presage,
 Zerbino on his pensive steed she plac'd,
 And travers'd many a mile the dreary waste.
 The hermit means to reach Provence, where stood,
 Near fam'd *Marseilles*, a holy house, endow'd
 With wealthy gifts, whose spacious walls contain'd
 Of heaven-devoted dames a saint-like band.
 Awhile their steps a friendly castle stay'd,
 Where, in a sable coffin clos'd, they laid
 The slaughter'd knight, and slowly thence convey'd.

Thus they; while distant far the Tartar lord,
 Proud of his ill got wreaths and conquer'd sword,
 His courser from the reins and saddle freed,
 And turn'd him loose to graze the flowery mead.

* OLD and NEW TESTAMENT.

Pleas'd

Pleas'd with the fair retreat, his limbs he laid
Beside the stream beneath the cooling shade; 470
But lay not long, ere from a distant height
Descending to the plain, appear'd a knight:
Him, soon as Doralis beheld, she knew,
And pointing out to Mandricardo's view,
Unless the distant sight deceive my eyes, 475
Lo! yonder comes fierce Rodomont (she cries)
Rage for my loss, affianc'd to his bed,
Has drawn down all his vengeance on thy head.

As the bold hawk a fiercer mien assumes,
Lifts his high head, and spreads his ruffled plumes,
If chance some birds of household breed he spies 481
(The starling, duck, or dove) before him rise;
So Mandricardo, well assur'd to bear
From Rodomont the bloody palm of war,
With joy exulting, mounts his steed again, 485
His feet the stirrups press, his hand the rein.

And now the wrathful chiefs approach'd so near,
That each the other's threatening words might hear.
The king of Algiers shook his haughty head,
Wav'd his right arm, and thus aloud he said: 490
Soon shall I make thee rue thy fatal joy,
Who for a short-liv'd gift, an amorous toy,

Haft dar'd to insult a prince, whose powerful hand
Shall wreak the vengeance that fuch wrongs demand.
Then Mandricardo thus—In vain he tries 495
To shake my courage who with threats defies.
Women and boys are fear'd with seeming harms,
Or those that ne'er were bred to use of arms :
Not fuch am I—whose soul no terror knows,
The hour of combat is to me repose : 500
On foot, on horse, disarm'd or arm'd, I dare,
In the close list, or open field of war.

Rage follows rage, and threatenings threatenings
breed ;

Their swords are drawn, and thundering strokes suc-
ceed.

Like winds that first but whisper through the brake,
Next the high tops of elms or beeches shake ; 506

Then whirl the gathering dust aloft in air,

Sweep cots away, and lay the forest bare ;

In tempests kill the flocks that graze the plain,

And whelm the vessels in the howling main : 510

These Pagan knights, whose like could ne'er be found

Through all the realms for deeds of arms renown'd,

With dauntless hearts, and many a dreadful stroke,

Pursu'd a fight that well their race bespoke.

With horrid clangor oft their falchions meet; 515
Earth seems to groan and shake beneath their feet;
While, from their batter'd armour, frequent fly
The fiery sparks, ascending to the sky.
On either side alike the knights assail
The plates to sever, or to rend the mail. 520
Each inch of ground they guard with equal care,
And in a narrow orb contract the war.
Amidst a thousand aim'd, the Tartar bends
A stroke, that driven with both his hands descends
On Sarza's front—the many-colour'd light 525
Now skims in mist before his dazzled fight.
Back fell the African, of sense bereav'd,
The crupper of his steed his helm receiv'd;
He lost his stirrups, and his seat had lost,
Even in her fight whose love he valu'd most: 530
But as a bow of temper'd steel, constrain'd
To yield reluctant to a potent hand,
The more it bends, the stronger, when releas'd,
It springs, and sends the shaft with force increas'd:
Again the Pagan rising from the blow, 535
Return'd redoubled vengeance on his foe.
Where late himself the hostile weapon felt,
Stern Rodomont on Mandricardo dealt

The furious blade: the blade no entrance found;
The Trojan casque secur'd the knight from wound:
But scarce the Tartar, with the blow bereav'd, 541
Of sight and sense, the day from night perceiv'd.

While Rodomont repeated strokes bestow'd,
And on his helmet laid the furious load;
The Tartar's courser, that beheld with fear 545
The hostile steel which hiss'd aloft in air,
With his own fate his rider's safety bought;
For while to shun the fearful noise he fought,
Full on his neck descends the weighty sword,
And gives to him the wound design'd his lord; 550
He wanted Hector's helm his head to shield,
And hence he fell—but instant from the field
Rais'd on his feet, again with fearless look
Bold Mandricardo Durindana shook:
Rage swell'd his breast to view his courser slain; 555
While Rodomont on him with loosen'd rein
Impell'd his steed; but Mandricardo stood,
Firm as some rock amidst the billowy flood;
When sudden with his lord extended low
Fell the proud courser of the Sarzan foe. 560
And swift the king of Algiers left his seat,
On equal terms the Tartar's arm to meet.

But,

But, lo ! an envoy came from Afric's bands,
With numbers more dispatch'd thro' Gallia's lands,
Back to their banners every chief to call, 565
And private knight, when need requir'd them all :
For he *, whose arms the golden lily bore,
Within their works besieg'd the Pagan power ;
And, did not speedy aid retrieve their fame,
Destruction soon must overwhelm the Moorish name. 570

The trusty herald, as he nearer drew,
By arms and vestment well the warriors knew ;
But more he knew them by their force in field,
And weapons, which like theirs no hands could wield.
He dares not rush between their wrathful swords, 575
And trust the privilege his name affords :
To Doralis he hastens first to tell
What deep mischance the Saracens befall ;
How Agramant, Marsilius, and their train,
With Stordilano join'd, a siege sustain 580
From Christian Charles ; and will'd her to relate
To either combatant their sovereign's state.

He said—the damsel with undaunted breast
Between them stept, and in these words address'd.

I charge ye, by the love which both profess, 585
For nobler ends your martial warmth suppress :

* CHARLES,

Go

Go where the Saracens besieg'd, await
 Your saving arm, or some disastrous fate;
 The herald then his embassy reveal'd,
 And letters gave to Ulien's offspring *, seal'd 590
 From king Troyano's son; when either knight
 Agreed to calm his wrath, and stay the fight;
 And fix the truce, till some propitious hour
 Should raise the siege, and free the suffering Moor;
 While Pride and Discord now indignant view'd 595
 The flame of strife by stronger love subdu'd.
 The truce confirm'd by her whose sovereign sway
 Compell'd each hardy champion to obey.
 One warlike steed they miss'd, for in the fight
 Lay dead the courser of the Tartar knight; 600
 When thither gallant Brigliadoro stray'd,
 That cropt, beside the stream, the verdant glade;
 Him Mandricardo soon with joy descri'd,
 Whose welcome presence well his loss supply'd,
 Meantime Rogero left the fatal well, 605
 Where sunk the buckler, wrought by magic spell,
 And many a mile he rov'd with cares oppress'd,
 Love ever present in his bleeding breast;
 At length his courser gain'd a rising ground,
 With pendent rocks and caves encompass'd round,

* RODOMONT.

A narrow

A narrow stony path before him lay, 611
And up the mountain led his weary way;
Where Agrifmont, a stately castle, stands,
Which Aldiger, of Clarmont's race, commands,
Who night or day, what chance might e'er befall,
Here guards with care his lov'd paternal wall. 616

Here Richardetto came, in arms approv'd,
A brother of Rogero's best belov'd:
These Aldiger receiv'd with courteous grace,
And gave each warrior welcome to the place: 620
Though now his guests he met not with that air
Of cheerful greeting he was wont to wear,
Instead of glad salute, with heavy look,
Young Richardetto first he thus bespoke.

Alas! my kinsman—hear me now disclose 625
Unwelcome news, to speak our kindred's woes.
Know Bertolagi, sprung of cruel feed,
Has with Lanfusa, ruthless dame! agreed
Large wealth in fums of countless gold to pay,
For which the dame our brethren shall convey, 630
Vivian and Malagigi, to the hand
Of Bertolagi, and his impious band,
Ere since Ferrau subdu'd their arms in fight,
In prison has she kept each hapless knight,

To-morrow's

To-morrow's fun the prisoners, with a guard, 635
She sends to Bertolagi, where prepar'd,
Near fair Bayona, he with gifts of cost
Shall buy the dearest blood that France can boast.

Ill Richardetto this advice receiv'd,
Which, grieving him, no less Rogero griev'd, 640
Who dauntless thus—Compose each anxious breast,
With me alone this enterprize shall rest;
Amidst a thousand drawn, this faithful sword
Shall timely succour to your friends afford.

He said; his words the kindling warmth inspire,
Each listening warrior caught the noble fire, 646
And now the knights with joint consent agree,
Without more aid to set the captives free,
Good Aldiger, by rising hopes reliev'd,
With welcome due his noble guest receiv'd; 650
And at his table plac'd, where plenty pour'd
Her well-fill'd horn, he honour'd as his lord.

The hour approach'd, when sleep prepar'd to close
The eyes of lords and knights in soft repose,
All save Rogero's; in whose anxious breast 655
Corroding thought repell'd approaching rest.
The siege of Agramant, which late he heard,
Engross'd his thoughts; he knew each hour deferr'd

To

To join his lord, must fully his fair fame,
Nor could he, but with deepest sense of shame, 660
Assist his sovereign's foes, and own the Christian
name.

He dares not yet to Agramant depart,
Without her leave, the sovereign of his heart,
Each thought by turns his dubious bosom sways;
Now this prevails, and now more lightly weighs. 665
And now he calls to mind his first design,
At Vallombrosa's walls his love to join,
His virgin-love, who there might well expect
His fight in vain, and blame his slow neglect.

He quits his bed—and pens and light demands:
The ready pages, with officious hands, 670
Each need supply—and first, as lovers use,
He greets her fair, then tells th' unwelcome news.
He bids her think, on him what shame must wait,
Should death or bondage be his sovereign's fate: 675
That since he hop'd her husband's name to gain,
No slightest blemish must his honour stain;
As nought impure must her pure love enjoy,
Whose soul was truth, refin'd from all alloy.
And as he oft had vow'd, he thus once more 680
His vows confirm'd; the fated season o'er,

For

For which he to his lord must keep unstain'd
His loyal truth; he then, if life remain'd,
By every proof would all her fears relieve,
And Christian faith with open rites receive; 685
And from her fire, her brother, all her train
Of kindred friends, her hand in marriage gain:
First will I raise (he said) with thy consent,
The siege by which my sovereign lord is pent,
Lest men should say, while Agramant maintain'd 690
His prosperous state, Rogero firm remain'd;
But now for Charles since Fortune changes hands,
He spreads his standard with the victor's bands.
I ask no more, and all my future life
I give to thee, my mistress and my wife. 695

The letter clos'd, he clos'd in slumber deep,
His heavy lids o'er-watch'd—the Power of Sleep
Stood near his couch, and o'er his members threw
The peaceful drops of Lethe's silent dew.
He slept, till in the east a breaking cloud 700
With blended hues of white and purple glow'd;
Whence flowers were strow'd o'er all the smiling skies,
And, thron'd in gold, the morn began to rise.

When now the birds, from every verdant spray,
With early music hail'd the new-born day, 705

Good

Good Aldiger (Roger o thence to lead,
With Richardetto, where their venturous deed
Must set the brethren free from captive bands,
Condemn'd to impious Bertolagi's hands)
Was first on foot; and with him either guest, 710
Who heard the summons, left his downy rest.
In meet array, and cloth'd with armour bright,
The gallant youth*, and either Christian knight
Now reach'd the destin'd place; a field that lay,
Of wide extent, expos'd to Phœbus' ray: 715
No laurel there, no myrtle's fragrant wood,
Nor oak, nor elm, nor lofty cypress stood;
But thorns and brambles chok'd the barren soil,
That felt no spade, nor own'd the ploughman's toil.
The three bold champions check'd their coursers' rein,
Where stretch'd a path extending o'er the plain; 720
When drawing nigh, a warrior they behold,
Array'd in costly arms that flam'd with gold,
In whose fair shield of vivid green appears
The wondrous bird that lives a thousand years. 725

* ROGERO.

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Who heard the summons, left his downy rest
In haste away, and clod'd with sorrowful
The gallant youth, and other Christian knights
Now reach'd the desired place; a field that lay
Of wide extent, expos'd to Herod's ray:
No laurel tree, no myrtle's fragrant wood,
Nor oak, nor elm, nor locust's flowery food;
But thorns and brambles choic'd the barren soil,
That felt no shade, nor own'd the plowman's toil.
The three bold champions choic'd their combat ring,
Where stretch'd a path extending to the spring;
When drawing nigh, a warrior they beheld,
Armed in costly arms that shon'd with gold,
In whose fair shield of vivid green appear'd
The wondrous bird that lives a thousand years.

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